

## "Nathan! Nathan!"

### AN OLD MAN'S STORY.

BY VIRGINIA F. TOWNSEND.

"Nathan! Nathan!"

Sixty years ago, this very day, the voice—the soft, tender, thrilling voice of my mother, came across the wide pasture lot and into the field, where I had been busy all day gathering up corn-stalks and making bonfires, which, as I was just outside of my fourteenth birthday, I enjoyed like any frolic. I looked up, and there stood my mother, in her checked apron and snowy "short-gown," shading her eyes with her hands: and though I am an old, old man now, and the brown curls which fluttered thickly about my forehead then, are a few straggling locks, white as fresh snow on the tops of the mountains, still that picture of my mother, standing at the lot bars, hangs itself over threescore years, and shines down brightly into my memory now; and the voice comes down, through its long path of green summers and white winters, without losing one tone or inflection, and stirs my heart yet with its mother sweetness—"Nathan! Nathan!"

I had just laid a lighted branch at the foot of a huge pyramid of brushwood and corn-stalks, when my mother's voice came through the stillness and the spicy fragrance of the May afternoon, and I stopped for a moment to see the mass ignite, and then hurried across the pasture lot opposite our house—our old, ample, yellow farm house, whose foundations had been laid by my grandfather before the Revolution.

"What is to pay, mother?" I asked, as I panted up to her, for her face was full of perplexity and annoyance.

"The minister's come!" She paused a moment after making this announcement, so that it might have due weight and impressiveness with me, and then she went on: "I never was so frustrated in my born days. Your father's three miles off at Rye Neck, pullin' stumps; and Jerushy started off right after dinner, to help Thankful Turner get ready for her quilting to-morrow.

"It seems there was some mistake in the message he sent to your father, and Mr. Willetts was to come Thursday instead of next Tuesday, as we expected. I haven't had my front room curtains done up, and I had dreadful poor luck with my last bakin'; (Miss Morgan's emptins was, to my mind, a little turned,) and I r'ally felt as though I should like to have

the floor open and swallow me up, when I went to the door, and there stood the sprucest looking young man I've sot my eyes on for many a day; and says he, with jist the wiin'est smile, 'Does Deacon Cummings reside here, ma'am?' 'Yes, sir, but he's out now,' I said, wonderin' who he could be. But he soon satisfied me, for he answered, 'It's Mr. Willetts, the new minister, ma'am.' "

"What did you do then, mother?" I said, in a deeply sympathetic frame of mind, for I was the only son of a New England deacon, and I had been educated with all that reverence and awe of the clerical profession, which was so deeply ingrained into the social and religious life of our Puritan ancestors.

"I was dreadfully taken down, but I asked him to walk in, and I showed him up to the spare chamber. I put on the valance last week, and sanded the floor fresh this very mornin'; and then I started straight for you, and it wont do for me to stand here talkin' another minit."

"Wall, mother, what is it you want of me? I jist wish the parson had kept away until next Thursday, and not come botherin' us at jist the wrong time." I continued angrily stripping a tall mullein stalk of its broad leaves, for I in no wise relished the idea of being called from making bonfires to waiting on ministers.

"Hush, my son! Your father wouldn't like to hear you talk in that way of havin' a minister under our roof." But I had an intuition that my mother's honest sentiments respecting the parson's advent fully concurred with my own.

"And now, Nathan, I want you to be as spry as a fark, and catch a chicken and kill it, and I'm in hopes to have it picked and a bilin' afore the parson leaves his room; then you must tackle up Major, and go over to Four Corners to Miss Turner's, and bring Jerushy home in double quick time. It wont do to waste another minit talkin'. Now, Nathan, don't let grass grow under your feet."

My mother started for the house, and I for the barnyard, with no very amiable emotions towards the parson; and as I could not vent my indignation on that individual himself, I managed to make a small dog, which ran across my path, the innocent victim of my wrath, by striking him with a stone, which sent him limping and yelling away.

The chicken was soon decapitated, and by the time I had harnessed Major I was in a better frame of mind, and a brisk ride of half

an hour brought me to the red farm house, facing two of the four roads which had christened the left wing of the old, straggling town of Greenfield. Streams of laughter poured in silvery currents through the open chamber windows, and seemed like a sweet tune set to that jubilant May afternoon, for she stood arrayed in garments fairer than those of "Solomon in all his glory"—garments which the marvelous looms of the sunshine and the early rains had woven for her, and embroidered the robe with dandelions, and seamed it with sweet wild violets, and overshot it with white clover.

I was a boy then, and the æsthetic element had had little stimulant or cultivation in the cool, brisk, practical life amid which my boyhood blossomed; but I felt the voice and language of that May afternoon; and the silvery, careless laughter of the girls in the chamber overhead, filled my heart like a chime of bells, as I reined up and tied my horse to the old post in front of the Widow Strong's dwelling.

I struck the brass knocker, and Jerusha put her head out of the chamber window; and in all the town of Greenfield no sweeter face could have been seen that that of my sister, Jerusha Cummings, as it framed itself in the old brown window casing that spring afternoon.

So young, so fresh, so full of health and bloom it was, with smiles lurking in the wide blue eyes, and dimpling archly the cheeks, in which carnations were set, that you could not choose but love it at the first glance; and about it, like a fitting frame, lay the thick, silky, dark hair, full of golden lights and heavy shadows.

"Nathan Cummins, I'd like to know what in the world has brought you over here?" exclaimed my sister, in a tone where surprise and apprehension struggled together, for it was evident she feared a summons home, and was alarmed lest some untoward event had made it necessary.

"Let me come up stairs and I'll tell you," for the merriment in the front chamber had stimulated my boyish curiosity.

"Well, hurry up, then;" and I was not slow in obeying this injunction, although I knew very well that I was the bearer of very unwelcome tidings.

There were some half-dozen girls scattered about the great, old fashioned chamber, in the centre of which stood the quilt, enclosed in the long frames; and on one side of the sheet of white and pink patchwork stood Jerusha, a ball of chalk in one hand and a cord in the other,

with which implements she and the bride elect were bestowing a border of "shell pattern" around the margin of the quilt, while two others were working the corner scallops—and Mrs. Strong, a little, dumpy, keen-eyed woman, was stoning raisins, with the assistance of two others of Thankful's young friends.

My first glance took in all these things, while there was a general cessation of fingers and tongues, and every eye was bent on me, as I delivered my errand:

"Jerushy, Parson Willetts has just come to our house, and mother's in an awful stew, cos, father's at the Neck, and wants you to come home right straight off!"

"Oh that's too bad," was the regretful chorus, which followed my announcement.

"I jist' wish the parson had kept away till I'd got my quilt marked, Jerushy," said Thankful Turner, a pretty girl of twenty, whose face repeated her mother's, softened and tinted with bloom.

"I wish so too," subjoined Jerusha, the corners of her pretty mouth deepened into a pout.

"We'd jist got a goin' nicely with these shells, and I meant to have got round the quilt before sundown, and now I must leave it. I wonder, for my part, why the parson didn't see far enough to keep away this pertic-erler afternoon, at least. It's right down provokin' to think of," added Thankful Turner.

"Girls! girls!" interposed Mrs. Strong, with an oburgatory shake of the head. "I can't allow a minister of the gospel to be talked of in that 'ere fashion."

"I was havin' such a good time," said Jerusha, as she tied on her bonnet, and tried to keep the tears of vexation out of her blue eyes. "And now I've got to go home and sit before Parson Willetts, as prim and starch as though it was an awful sin to smile, and a laugh outright was too dreadful a thing to be thought of. I never could get on with ministers, anyhow."

This was scarcely surprising, for the few gray haired, solemn visaged representatives of the profession, who visited at our house, would not be apt to enlist the very warm sympathies or admiration of a young girl, impulsive, and overflowing with life and spirits, like my sister, Jerusha Cummings.

"Jerushy, I am afeard if your heart was in jist the right place, you would'nt be so set agin ministers," added Mrs. Turner, "and I must say it, sorry as I feel to have you leave us at this time."

And the little woman was right: and Jeru-

sha lived to see it—lived to separate the outward conventional sanctimoniousness from the inward heart and spirit, and then she found in those old Puritan ministers, the elements of a true, strong, honest manhood; she felt the spirit of submission to God, and love to man, which was the grand ruling purpose of their lives—she understood their self-sacrifice, their devotion; she honored the steadfast zeal which counted all things but loss for the knowledge and the approval of Him, whom they served, as being invisible; while all honors, and potentes, and powers, all fashions of this world, faded into insignificance before that one mightiest message, which they believed the King of Kings had ordained them to deliver unto men.

Jerusha and I hardly spoke to each other on our way home. My sympathy in her disappointment, by no means increased my stock of good will for the minister, but I obtruded my share of our mutual trial on her attention, though I presume, it shrank into very small proportions by the side of her own gigantic trouble.

"I shant get my field cleared now, afore father comes home. I'd jist got a heap blazin when mother called me off, to kill a chicken, afore I started for you."

"Do you hush up, Nathan," exclaimed Jerusha, in tones one would hardly have recognized. "I'm too exasperated to speak about it."

"Wall, Jerushy, its amazin' the time you've took to get here," began mother, as she met us at the kitchen door, with a very red face, and a very hurried manner. "I've jist been in a perfect fever for the last hour."

Jerusha did not condescend to make any reply. She walked into the room next to the parlor, with a look of settled resignation on her fair face, and removed her bonnet, and I helped her set out the table.

Then, mother bustled into the room. "I want you to get down the pink cheeny and rub up the old silver cream pot," she said. "I must have some of my best preserves on the table—they in the yaller jar, I did up in loaf sugar last fall. Why, what ails you, Jerushy," for looking up, our mother saw the cloud which darkened the fair face of her child.

Then Jerusha's pent up disappointment and vexation broke out, unable longer to control themselves.

"I should think there was matter enough," she exclaimed, as she shook out the folds of the linen table cloth, my mother had spun before her marriage; "when I'm sent for, as

though it was a matter of life and death, to get supper, for some old blind parson that don't know enough to keep from bothering folks' lives out. I'm free to say, that I haven't got a spark of patience left. I'd like to know how Thankful Turner's to get along with her quilt, for nobody else knows the round shell pattern, and the whole thing'll be spoiled; and the quiltin's comin' off to-morrow, and she to be married a week later, and I to be bridesmaid. I s'pose though, a parson's supper's of so much more importance than common folks' quiltin's and weddin's, that they're not to be mentioned in the same day."

"Jerushy! Jerushy!" said mother, in a tone of solemn warning.

"I can't help it," bestowing the pink china cups on the waiter. "It's the most aggravatin' thing that ever happened in my born days. I'm bound not to sleep this night, afore I've got that double border of shells on Thankful Turner's quilt. But I must say, that I never knew a minister that didn't come at jist the wrong time. It's a faculty they have, and bein' a deacon's daughter, I can speak from experience."

"Jerushy," interposed mother, "I never heard you go on so, in my born days! What would your father say to hear you talk in that style! It isn't a week since he told me that it was one of the strongest desires of his heart, to see you the wife of a parson!"

"Catch me!" exclaimed Jerusha, with a toss of her pretty head, and a fresh blossoming of the carnations in her round cheeks. "I'll live and die on old maid first."

Our mother gave a groan at this exhibition of her daughter's obduracy; but a loud sputtering, from the "spider" in the kitchen, where the chicken was frying, took her suddenly off, and Jerusha turned to me, saying, "Nathan, you jist go to the best room closet, and bring me the yaller jar on the second shelf, and mind you don't break it. Boys are alays so clumsy."

There was only a small front "entry" separating the room in which my sister was preparing tea, and the one which was only used on state occasions; and as I entered the latter, I was almost paralyzed by seeing a young man sitting in the great arm chair by the window, one cheek resting on his hand, while an amused smile was hiding itself about his mouth, combated by an expression of some annoyance. He was tall and slight, and his thin, thoughtful, handsome face suited the figure. His eyes and hair were a dark brown,

and he must have been several years this side of thirty.

It flashed into my mind like lightning, that this was the young parson, and that he must have heard every word my sister had spoken, for her voice was raised, and the doors of both rooms were ajar.

I stood still, too overwhelmed to utter a word, or move hand or foot; but the young minister came straight forward and took my hand, and said with a smile, which gave a new warmth and beauty to the pale handsome face, "I am very glad to see you, my boy! I came down stairs about five minutes ago, and hope I am not intruding here."

I attempted to answer Parson Willets, but the words died in my throat. I think that he pitied my confusion, understanding perfectly the cause of it, for he asked, "Are you in quest of anything here?"

"I want the yaller jar in the closet," I stammered.

He went towards it and opened the door, while I followed like one in a dream; but the shelf was too high, and at that moment my sister's voice floated in to me.

"Nathan, are you staying to help yourself to the preserves first?"

"Let me assist you," said the parson, and he reached down the small earthen jar, and placed it in my hands, and this time there was a smile on his lips, which his eyes repeated.

I hurried back to my sister, who was just disposing the knives and forks around the table, in a more composed frame of mind after her ebullition of irritable feeling. "Jerushy," I gasped, "the parson's in the parlor, and he's overheard every word you've said!" She gave me a look of bewilderment and fright, and the blossoms grew small in her cheeks. She started towards the door, scarcely conscious of what she was doing; but anxious to satisfy herself of the truth of my statement.

The young minister had gone to the table to examine some volumes which lay there, and so Jerusha did not see him until she had advanced into the room, when the young man turned and confronted her.

It would not be an easy matter to depict the pitiable confusion of Jerusha Cummings at that moment. She had conceived Parson Willets a typical representative of the stately old Puritan minister, stiff, solemn, dignified; and when she saw the young parson with his handsome, scholarly face and courteous bearing, and recalled the feelings she had expressed regarding his inopportune visit, and her general

opinions respecting his profession, all power of speech forsook her, and her sweet young face covered with blushes and making it look prettier than ever, she stood dumb before the minister.

He attempted to set her at ease. "This is deacon Cummings's daughter, I presume?" he said. "There is no need of my introducing myself."

Jerusha tried to answer; but the words would not leave the poor girl's quivering lips, instead of which, there came a sob, and breaking down into tears of mortification, Jerusha buried her face in her hands and sank into a chair.

"Now, Miss Cummings, I beg you won't give yourself a moment's unhappiness about anything to which I may have been an unintentional listener. I made all the noise I could to attract your attention, and was debating whether I had better announce myself, by closing the door, which you must have seen me do, when your brother entered. I regret very much that you should have been summoned home on my account; but, being neither very old, nor very gray haired, I shall not include myself in that list of my brethern, who have been so unfortunate as to have incurred your dislike."

Jerusha lifted her tearful face at these words. She saw the smile which lurked in the minister's eyes, and being herself a young person of uncontrollable risibles, and keen sense of the ridiculous, she burst out into a quick leaping laugh, in which Parson Willetts heartily joined.

The laugh reached our mother, who had just placed her platter of fried chicken, done to the orthodox brown, in the centre of a table flanked with a mound of smoking biscuit and a pyramid of tempting crullers, with preserves and tumuli of blackberry jam, all delicious enough to allure the appetite of any mortal whether minister or otherwise. She went to the door and looked into the parlor, but the minister and Jerusha were not within her range of vision, and she turned back to me with an expression of great bewilderment on her face.

"What does it all mean, Nathan?" she asked, for I was standing near the door.

"Oh, nothing much, only Parson Willetts and Jerushy are having a little joke together."

"Seems to me they've got acquainted in mighty quick time," pouring the cream into the cups.

But, at that moment, father entered the room, and was at once informed of our guest's arrival. Of course he was not long in welcom-

ing the minister, as mother was in great trepidation lest her chickens and coffee should get cold.

I shall never forget that first supper of Parson Willetts at our house. It was as much as Jerusha or I could do, to keep a straight face on while the blessing was being asked; but we both got sobered, as father and Parson Willetts, went into a long conversation on the state of the church, the prospects of the crops that harvest, the sudden death of Parson Minor, after being settled for "up'ard of fifty years" over the South Presbyterian Church, in the town of Greenfield, and the inauguration of the new President.

At last, in some pause which slipped into their conversation, the minister said, glancing from my sister's face to my mother's, "Your daughter resembles you strikingly, Mrs. Cummings."

"Yes," answered my father, glancing at the little pale-faced woman, who sat at the head of the table, with an expression which said, he saw her still in the "first blossoming of her womanhood," when her cheeks were like the meadow roses she used to wind in her hair. "Jerushy's the complete picter of what her mother was at nineteen; and, as for Nathan here, he's a reg'lar chip of the old block—all Cummins, and not a bit of Warner in him!"

I looked at my father, the strong built, muscular, stalwart, sunburnt farmer that he was, and wondered if I should ever be like him.

"Nathan," said my father, as he rose from the table, "you and Jerry must milk the cows this evenin', and then I want you to step over to Squire Platt's and tell him I'll call to-morrow and see about takin' that yoke of oxen."

"You can take Squire Platt's in the way when you come home from Four Corners," interposed mother, "for you must carry Jerushy right back to Miss Turner's. Never mind the dishes, Jerushy, I'll do all the chores, for it wont do to have the Thankful Turner's weddin' quilt spiled."

"I should like to take a look at some part of the town of Greenfield," said the young minister; "and with your permission, Miss Cummings, I will save your brother the trouble of carrying you over to the Four Corners."

"Thank you, sir. I should be much pleased to have you," answered Jerushy, betwixt a blush and a smile; and she went after her bonnet, and her mother followed and entreated her to "behave steady, and remember she was in a minister's company, and not go to cuttin' up any of her jokes."

"He looks pretty young," said my father to my mother, as he returned from the "barn gate," which he had just closed after the wagon, which contained the minister and Jerusha; "but he seems a sound minded, well eddycated, pious young man, and it isn't al'ays in age that wisdom resides. I hope if he comes among us that his labors will be greatly blessed."

"I hope so, Richard," she said. "I must say, I took a fancy to him from the first, he's such a pleasant spoken, handsome faced young man."

"Fine feathers don't make fine birds, al'ays, mother," said father, taking out his weekly newspaper.

"Wall, you didn't say so once, Nathan Cummins, when you went down to the old fort every Wednesday and Sunday night," retorted my mother, with a smile which brought back something of the lost beauty of her youth to her face.

What reply father made I never knew, for at that moment I caught sight of our "hired man," who was driving the cows home from pasture, and seizing my cap I rushed after them.

The "round shell border" was achieved, although Jerusha had to sit up till "nigh upon one o'clock," and averred that she was in consequence, a perfect fright at the quilting next day.

But, as nobody else concurred in that young lady's opinion respecting her personal appearance, I am inclined to think it was only one of those slight expansions of the truth, in which her sex are so apt to indulge.

I know that everybody said they had a lively time at Widow Turner's, and I have the best of reasons for supposing the sudden advent of the new minister was duly commented on, and that his personal appearance, and all sorts of speculations embracing his attachments and future relations, alternated with gossip and jests about the wedding which was to transpire the next week. My sister was Thankful Turner's bridesmaid, and Mr. Willetts performed the marriage ceremony, and looked, so some of the younger portion of the guests declared, as though he would have liked very much to join in some of the plays which always accompanied a wedding in those days, if his profession had not interdicted it.

The following summer Mr. Willetts was duly installed as pastor of the South Presbyterian Church of Greenfield; and although there was some slight dissent among the older members

on account of his youth, still I know that Mr. Willetts was regarded by most of his congregation as a young man of exceeding promise; and they affirmed that no sermons had ever issued from the pulpit of the South Presbyterian Church like those which were heard every Sunday from the lips of Parson Willetts; and I may be permitted to add here my own testimony, founded on years of most intimate personal friendship with the man, that his own life was an embodiment of the principles which he preached, and that his was one of those, of whom the Master said at the close of his long, faithful work of love, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"

The young minister remained at our house a month before he went to board with Mrs. Minor, the widow of our former pastor, for the old lady still occupied the parsonage.

We all became much attached to our minister, and greatly regretted his leaving our house; but we used to see him frequently, for he always had some church business with "Deacon Cumminge," which brought him over to our house every few evenings, and he insisted there was no spot which seemed so much like home to him in all Greenfield. Jerusha and he got on very nicely together, notwithstanding his first inauspicious advent at our house; and I know it frequently happened that the minister's calls at our house fell on evenings when my father and mother had gone to a "tea drinking" at some neighbor's, and that Mr. Willetts had a habit of walking home with my parents and sister from the weekly prayer meeting.

I know, too, that Jerusha's father and mother underwent a great deal of anxiety on account of her high spirits and love of fun, which she could not restrain before the minister, notwithstanding her father's frequent warnings, "Jerusha! Jerusha! my daughter!"

I overheard mother lamenting to father this proclivity of her daughter's one day, when he was mending his scythe, and he answered,

"Wall, mother, it's in young blood, jist as it's in young colts, to run wild for awhile, and it's no use holdin' the rein too tight. It's my opinion the gal 'ill come out all right in the end, and make jist the same sober-minded, sterlin' woman her mother did afore her, and she'll see that her daughter came honest enough by her love of fun, if she'll only look back a risin' of twenty years."

"Wall, I'm sure I don't mean to be hard on Jerushy," responded mother, quite softened by this allusion to her own youth.

One evening, in the following autumn, I returned home late from a neighbor's, with whose son I had been down the river fishing that afternoon. It was a still, ripe night, with the large stars hanging their golden embroideries along the sky, and the sleeping face of the earth was wrapped up in a snowy veil of moonlight, which made it fairer than the beauty of the day.

As I approached the gate, I saw Parson Willetts and my sister come out of the front door, and the voice of the latter floated out to me in the stillness, as she suddenly paused on the steps:—

"Wont you wait a moment, Stephen? I'll run back and get my shawl, if we are to walk as far as Berry Bridge, for the dew will be heavy returning."

"Certainly it will. I am glad to see you take some thought for yourself for once, Jerusha;" and the girl's break of light, sweet laughter, was flung back for answer as she went up the stairs. I went surreptitiously into the house by the back way, so that no one saw me, revolving in my mind what I had heard, and scarcely believing the evidence of my own ears.

The next morning I watched my opportunity, and went to my sister while she was churning butter in the milk-room. "Jerushy, didn't you call Mr. Willetts' 'Stephen' last night?"

She paused. I can see her now, with her hand grasping the churn-handle, and the carnations in her cheeks suddenly bloomed into wide, bright roses, as she asked—

"How do you know I did?"

"No matter—I heard you! How dared you do such a thing, and be a minister, Jerushy Cummins?"

A little half arch, half defiant smile played among the dimples above her lips.

"Jerushy," I said, shocked at what seemed to me fresh proof of her audacity, "I've a good will to go straight and tell father, and I shall if you ever do so again. What would he say?"

And as I was indignantly going away, after delivering this threat, my sister's voice summoned me back.

"See here, Nathan," she said, with a great twinkle of fun in her eyes, although she managed to keep her lips tolerably quiet, "supposin' Mr. Willetts has told me that he would never consent to my callin' him anything but Stephen as long as I live, what then?"

This presented a new aspect to the matter. I stood debating it with myself a few moments, and then, like a flash of lightning, the truth suddenly came to me. "Jerushy, you're goin' to be married to Parson Willetts." The roses were peonies now.

"Well, what if I am? Have you any objections?"

"Didn't I hear you say you'd die an old maid afore you'd marry a minister?"

"Well, folks change their minds, sometimes," was her laconic, comprehensive reply.

I went off whistling, but Jerusha's voice came after me again.

"Do you see anything very bad in my callin' the minister 'Stephen' now, Nathan?"

"No, I s'pose not, considerin'."

A year and a half went by, and my sister, Jerusha Cummings, was Parson Willetts' wife. She passed most of this time at a young ladies' boarding school, in a city a hundred miles away, and returned with mind enlarged and cultivated, with manners softened and dignified, well fitted for the new position she was to occupy.

My father's prophecy respecting Jerusha was verified. Her generous impulses "crystallized into solid principles," and Stephen Willetts never regretted the day which brought him an unwelcome guest to our threshold; for his fair young wife shed about his home the sanctity of a loving, Christian womanhood, and sweetened and enriched every hour of his life with her tenderness and self-sacrifice. The new parsonage, which his people built for Parson Willetts, is still standing, and boards the memories of fifty-seven years in its silent rooms.

A fair company of boys and girls grew up to man and womanhood under its roof, and nephews and nieces have not forgotten the counsels of their youth in the prime of their years.

My father and mother, Jerusha and her husband, have all gone to walk under the cedars and the palm trees of the city of our God.

I am an old, old man, as I said, and my children's children play around me now, and their joyous laughter seems sometimes to stir in my heart the pulses of its youth; but they never bound as they do on some fifteenth of May, fair with sunshine and sweet with south winds, as is this one, just like that one far away in the land of my boyhood, from which comes stealing up, through its long path of three-score years, the voice of my mother, as it came to me across the pasture lot *that day*: "Nathan! Nathan!"

And in a little while, I who now stand in "patient waiting," hope to hear it again, floating in tones that my heart will recognize across the green pastures and bright waters of the kingdom of Heaven: "Nathan! Nathan!"

## Aunt Jane's Experience.

BY MRS. F. W. CUSHMAN.

Aunt Jane Lovell had seen much of life, and her conversation was both amusing and instructive. I valued her society most highly, for she had a most fascinating way of telling stories and giving good advice. True, the style in which she expressed her sentiments was somewhat peculiar; but the good humor, kindness, and strong common sense manifest in her every word, made ample amends for any freedom of speech in which she might indulge.

At one time when Aunt Jane was visiting my father, my most intimate friend, Nellie Rosmer, came to spend a few days with me, her last visit previous to her marriage. One day we were alone together—Nellie indulging in the most glowing anticipations of future happiness, and I listening with girlish interest and delight to the plans she was so enthusiastically forming; yet, I fear with a secret regret that I had no such pleasant prospects. While we were thus engaged, Aunt Jane quietly entered the room, established herself in her favorite chair, and produced her inevitable knitting.

"Don't let me disturb you, girls," she said, for we had become suddenly mute. "If you stop talking, I shall of course think I am unwelcome."

"O! you must not think so," replied Nellie, quickly. "Our conversation was of no consequence. I was talking nonsense to Esther, here," and she gave me a bright look. "We had rather hear you talk."

"I hear that you are soon to marry," remarked Aunt Jane, rather abruptly.

The roses deepened on the cheeks of the fair fiancée, but she made no reply. Aunt Jane resumed, very soberly,

"Do not fall into the common error of young

brides, my child, that of anticipating too much happiness in your new connection, for you will inevitably be disappointed. Do not think, my dear Nellie, that I am trying to dampen your feelings. I have half a mind," she continued, thoughtfully, "to tell you some of my early troubles in the marriage relation, that you may take warning. Forewarned, forearmed, you know."

"Why, Aunt Jane!" I exclaimed, in utter surprise, "I didn't know that you ever had any troubles; you always look so serene, and are so good natured and patient, and so happy with your husband. It can't be that you ever quarreled."

"You shall hear my story, and judge. I was very young, a mere child, when I married your uncle. I had been indulged, nay, almost spoiled, by a doting mother. Every wish had been gratified. Of course, I expected equal indulgence from a husband. My lover was devoted; my mother neglected to tell me that my husband might be a little less so. So I thought, like most young girls, that my dear James had every virtue, no fault; every excellence, and none of the weaknesses common to poor human nature. I totally forgot that, though I very often lost my temper, he would ever lose his. That it was not likely he would always wear a smile. That his business might worry him, and that in consequence, he might be taciturn. In short, I did not reflect that those little *agremens* which constitute the chief happiness of lovers, should or would be discontinued as a matter of course, when the knot was tied. Thus though my husband was a far better one than generally falls to the lot of woman, and very kind and attentive, yet I was silly enough to make myself most unhappy the first year of my married life, and all about trifles. Remember, my dear Nellie, not to look at your husband's faults through a magnifying glass. If you discover some imperfection



of which you never dreamed, (and you certainly will, for men and women alike veil something of their true characters in courtship,) by kindness and love endeavor to reform them. If this cannot be done, pass them over gently; strive to forget them. At any rate, never vaunt your own superiority—that never will do.

“But to return. If my husband chanced to leave the house without the usual parting kiss, I would torment myself all day with the thought that his affection for me was on the wane. If he came home with a long face, though caused by business troubles, as I now know, I invariably came to the conclusion that he was offended; my own visage elongated, and there was no more sunshine for me that day. If he seemed thoughtful, I would fear lest he was repenting his marriage, and lost in contemplation of the charms of some former love. If I exerted myself in preparing some favorite dish, and he forgot or neglected to speak of it, I would make myself miserable, thinking that he was no longer pleased with what I did. You see, my dear girls, that in those weary days, I was not *very* serene, and although we did not *quarrel*, yet I was far from happy. I do not wish you to think that I was *always* in trouble; it required but a trifling thing to make or mar my happiness. I devotedly loved my husband, and a kind word or a caress would dispel the clouds at any time. He imputed my uneven spirits to natural despondency; he little thought it was because of my total inexperience in human character. At last I became so far reconciled to my lot, that my husband's manners did not trouble me quite so much. His quiet departure did not disturb my peace of mind; and I also made the important discovery, that when he was low-spirited the best way for me was to express my sympathy, and then be as cheerful as possible. I had taken every opportunity to notice the appearance of other young married couples, and could not see that husbands in general were any more affectionate than my own. So you see I was getting along very comfortably, when a circumstance occurred which brought back all my doubts and troubles.

“A young cousin of my husband's came to visit us; she was a great favorite with James. I had heard him speak of her in terms of the highest praise. In truth, Mabel Vaughn was a lovely girl; very beautiful in form and face; full of animation; intelligent and amiable withal; one could not help loving her.

I was enjoying her society extremely, until one day I surprised her in very earnest conversation with my husband; upon my entrance they became strangely silent. What could they be talking about, I could not help thinking; why need they preserve so much secrecy? And when I chanced upon frequent conferences, which always ceased suspiciously upon my entrance, while significant looks were interchanged, I began to have doubts of Mabel. She seemed guileless as a child; could there be any deceit under that winning manner? I watched James, but failed to discover anything, save those whispered interviews I have mentioned. What they could be talking about was more than I could fathom, and I suppose I may as well own up, I was getting terribly jealous.”

“I never should have thought of such a thing,” was my involuntary exclamation.

“No doubt it seems very ridiculous to you,” continued Aunt Jane, “but it was a stern reality to me. In fact, I was so worried and unhappy that my health began to fail, and I was confined to my room, though not a word did I breathe of the real cause of my indisposition; no, I was too proud to utter reproaches. Yet much to my surprise, they both showed extreme solicitude for me. Mabel was devoted in her attentions, and tried in every possible way to amuse and divert me, while my husband displayed more tenderness than I had given him credit for. I heard no more whispering nor saw significant looks. I began to think perhaps I had wronged them by my unfounded suspicions, and as my malady was of the mind, as hope reigned in my bosom once more, I recovered rapidly. In a few days I resumed my usual place in the household, with a fixed resolution to let nothing trouble me until I was sure that I was deceived. But alas! what are human resolutions? The very next day, I opened the sitting-room door suddenly, and heard Mabel say hurriedly, ‘H-sh, sh, she is coming.’ I went in and thought Mabel looked guilty, but my husband seemed perfectly self-possessed, and addressed some trifling remark to me in an unconcerned tone. The flood of despair rolled over my soul: you can imagine, from what I have already told you of my previous state of mind. I wanted no other proof that my husband was unfaithful, and that one I had treated with a sister's confidence had betrayed me. I have naturally great command over myself, and I managed to conceal my emotion from them; but what tumult raged within!”

Aunt Jane paused and looked up with a calm smile, and manifested more complacency, I thought, than was exactly compatible with such an unpleasant subject.

"And what happened next?" timidly inquired I.

"Well, after dinner, my husband proposed that we should take a walk down to 'Pine Grove,' a favorite walk of ours. 'And be sure and look your prettiest, Janey,' in the old loving tone, 'remember it is your birthday, my dear.' The loving words and looks were almost too much for my forced composure; but I complied with his request. Accompanied by Mabel we proceeded to the grove, and there I learned the meaning of all those whispers and stolen glances which had so disturbed my peace."

"What *did* it mean?" eagerly interrupted Nellie, "I am so impatient to know."

"It meant that I was so extremely silly and absurd, as to be jealous of my husband and Mabel while they were projecting and arranging a little pic-nic in our favorite grove, in honor of my birthday."

"O, for shame, Aunt Jane!" I exclaimed, and Nellie burst into a merry laugh.

"I felt ashamed then, when my friends and neighbors crowded around, wishing many happy returns. I felt ashamed when I saw my husband's satisfied look and Mabel's triumphant glee, and a feeling of shame has followed me until this hour; but though a severe lesson, it had a happy ending. They had intended a complete surprise, and hence the secret conferences. Dear Mabel had exerted herself to the utmost to have all things in readiness, and not have me suspicious of what was going on. She never suspected how I was misjudging her while all those preparations were going on. Now, girls, I have not told you all this, because I think you likely to fall into a similar error, but to show you that we can at least view things in a rational light. It is certain that we shall all have trials enough in this world without imagining any, and so small a portion of happiness that we cannot afford to part with any that it is within our power to retain. Remember, my dear, that a wife should endeavor to conform her tastes and habits to those of the man with whom she is to walk to her grave. That in the practice of gentleness, patience and forbearance, we enhance our own happiness, while contributing to that of another."

And with her own benignant smile, Aunt Jane left the room.

## Broken Glass,

### AND THE ROMANCE THEREOF.

BY CLARA GRAHAME.

We had finished breakfast—John had taken up his newspaper—Harry, John's brother, and Belle Paine, a young lady visiting me, had settled themselves on the lounge, at the west window, for their customary morning flirtation, while I was busy washing the coffee cups, (they were a wedding present from Aunt Betsey, and I never trust Jane with them.) All at once John broke out with,

"Hallo, Maggie! here's one of those romantic advertisements you're always hunting up; I shouldn't wonder if there *was* something in this one—it's queer, isn't it?"

He then read aloud, as follows:—

"Will the lady who, in September, 18—, accidentally broke a pane of glass in the window of the Lady's Drawing-Room, A— House, Boston, send her address to J. W. Clapp & Co., attorneys at law, Boston, Mass."

I was looking intently at something on one of Aunt Betsey's cups, that had the appearance of a crack, and therefore was silent till John said,

"Well Maggie; how do you make it—isn't there a romance in a nut-shell, or, rather, pane of glass? I wonder if some poor fellow's heart got smashed with that window—and if he's going to sue for damages?"

I said I was sure I didn't know, and proceeded to count my spoons and forks, a habit I indulge in every morning. By this time Belle and Harry had caught the word "romance," and pricking up their ears at the sound thereof, pronounced several sage opinions as to the meaning and object of the singular paragraph; while John returned to his newspaper and another "row in Congress," as he rather disrespectfully terms any little differences that may arise in that august and dignified body.

Pretty soon the gentlemen went down town. Belle buried herself in a new novel, and I, carelessly taking up *that* paper with several others, escaped with it to my own room, where, having locked the door, I seated myself to read with my own eyes the very singular and romantic advertisement; for reader, it *was* romantic, and what was *more*, I had the key to the romance, or once had, for I thought it all ended years ago; when Philip Armstrong—but I won't be premature.

After sitting for some time, pondering several things in my heart, I opened my desk, took a

sheet of paper, wrote a few lines, enclosed it in an envelope, which I directed to the address indicated in the paper; this I dispatched by Jane to the post office, and then stopped to think what I had done—what would come of it—what John would say, and finally ended my morning operations by a refreshing "crying spell;" that lasted me till near dinner time, and left me with a delightful headache. At dinner, John remarked,

"Maggie! did you know one of the side lights in the hall was broken?"

I being rather absent minded just then, replied, "Yes; I broke it when I was fifteen."

Upon his laying down his knife and fork and looking at me as if he thought I had lost my wits, I made out to come to myself again, and said,

"I mean Jane broke it with her mop handle."

"That's rather more to the point, Maggie: besides I don't believe you can remember as far back as when you were fifteen; but I don't know but you are getting on to your second childhood, at any rate you seem to have returned to teaspoons."

I didn't know I was attempting to cut my meat with a teaspoon; but I put in my headache as a plea for absent-mindedness, and managed to get through dinner without making any more egregious blunders.

And now, before I say anything of the results of the imprudent letter I have told you of, I must go back—of course I shan't say just how *many years*—to my fifteenth summer, when the *past* was nothing, the future everything to my girlish imagination. We lived in a quiet town, many miles away from the famous New England metropolis, and a journey to Boston was looked upon as an important event by us school girls. I was, therefore, highly delighted when my father proposed that I should accompany him in one of his frequent business trips to the city. Oh, the pleasure of telling my companions that I should not be at school the next week, as I was going to spend it in Boston, the announcement being made with an indifferent air, as though going to Boston were an every day affair with me. How I gloried in my preparations—a new silk dress, *not made out of mother's*—a real travelling dress, cape and all, not to mention linen collars and barege veil; how I spent hours in packing and unpacking my trunk, lest I should leave something behind, then saying good by to those unfortunate members of the family who were *not* going to Boston; the wonders of the steamboat, the dignity of having a state-room

to myself, and the stewardess to wait on me. All these things, "are they not written on the book of my remembrance?" But what were they compared with the marvels of the great city itself? with all its din and bustle, its stone blocks and its stone pavements, its loaded drays, and its crowded omnibuses, its Common and its Beacon street, its Old South and its Faneuil Hall.

We stopped at the A— House, which was then prominent among the first-class hotels (since then its gilding has become dim and its green velvet faded,) and as I entered the hall with its floor of different colored marbles, the fountain playing in the centre, with bright-bued fishes sporting in the basin, and passed into the large drawing-room, with the soft carpet gorgeous with buds and blossoms, heavy crimson and gold curtains, immense mirrors and velvet covered furniture; it seemed to my inexperienced eyes that all the splendors of an Oriental palace were embodied before me.

Awe struck, I perched myself upon the edge of a chair, and sat motionless, until shown to my room. That first dinner, how I dreaded it, and how endless seemed the long dining hall, as we walked to seats in the farther extremity; what a painful sense of nothingness came over me in the presence of that white-aproned troop of waiters; the knowledge that one was stationed behind my chair seemed to take away all power of handling my knife and fork, (between ourselves) I've no doubt I said "sir," every time I ventured to address him. After a day or two I was less oppressed by the surrounding splendor, and began to rather enjoy the novelty of my position. Although my father took me out sight-seeing every day, he was much occupied with business and I was a good deal of the time by myself. There were many ladies staying in the house, but they were elegant, fashionable women, and a little, awkward country girl attracted but little of their attention; so I spent a good deal of my time in the drawing-room when it was otherwise deserted, looking out of the windows, and trying the relative softness of the various chairs and sofas.

One morning, father having gone out as usual, I was engaged in my usual employment of looking at the busy life in the street below. The day being warm, I attempted to raise the window, and, in so doing, by some clumsy movement, broke a pane of glass. I stood gazing at the shattered fragments, a picture, I suppose, of utter consternation, when a

gentleman who had been walking up and down the corridor, and whom I had observed as he passed and repassed the open door, came in, and approaching me, asked if he could render me any assistance. I hardly dared speak for fear tears would accompany the words; (I was very young) but I at last ventured to tell him that I wished to pay for the damage I had done. It may have been verdant in me, reader, but I think the principle that actuated me was a true one; the gentleman smiled pleasantly, told me he would see to that, and to give myself no farther trouble, and before I was aware of it, I was talking as freely to him as if I had known him from a child. Perhaps I ought to describe his personal appearance, but I never could describe anything to my own satisfaction or that of any one else. I think he must have been about thirty, of medium size and gentlemanly address; the only thing that struck me particularly was his eyes, which lent a charm to the whole face. I cannot tell what color they were, they seemed to grow darker and brighter with each changing emotion, and when he smiled they were wonderfully beautiful. The acquaintance thus accidentally commenced, proved a very pleasant one, to me at least. Mr. Armstrong, that was his name, introduced me to his sister, who was spending a few days in the city with him, who, although she was a fashionable young lady, and several years older than myself, seemed to take quite a fancy to me, that I never could account for. We three, sometimes accompanied by my father, made several pleasant excursions to the well known places of interest in and around the city; together we visited that beautiful city of the dead—Mount Auburn; and together climbed the numberless stairs of the "Monument." We spied out all the wonders and curiosities of the Museum, and peeped into the cells of the Charlestown State Prison; but the week, like all other pleasant things of earth, came to an "untimely end," and I went back to my quiet home, to the "brick school house," and "horrid mathematics;" and for some time tried in vain to fix my wandering thoughts on the fortunes of "pious Æneas," or the sorrows of "unhappy Dido."

A year passed quietly away, during which time I "put up" my hair and donned longer dresses, becoming in outward appearance quite a passable young lady. We had not heard from our Boston friends since we parted at the rail-road station, when one day, at dinner, father asked me if I remembered Mr. Arm-

strong, saying that he had come to H—— to buy lumber, and that he would take tea with us that night. He came, the same agreeable and courteous gentleman of the year before; he looked agreeably surprised at the change in my personal appearance, though no word of compliment passed his lips; the family were all pleased with him, and during his stay of a few days in H——, he passed much of his time with us.

After he left, I was once in a while reminded of him, by a new book-piece of music, very rarely accompanied with short notes. I felt flattered by his partiality, and received these little gifts as tokens of friendship, that "old bachelors" frequently show for young girls who happen to please them.

I was consequently very much astonished when, more than a year after his visit, I received a letter from him, asking me to become his wife—saying, that when a very young man he had lost all confidence in woman's truth, on account of the faithlessness of one whom he loved—that the little affair of the "broken window," had convinced him that he was *wrong*—that the love of truth I then showed, interested him in me—that, for a long time, he had tenderly and truly loved me. He at the same time wrote to my father, asking his permission to address me. I cannot tell how grieved and sorry I was to hear this. I loved and esteemed him as a younger sister might, but the thought of him as a lover, had never entered my mind. Besides that, my heart was no longer my own; for, I had given it not long before, to him whom, some years after, became my husband. I could not write him myself; but, my father told him as tenderly as possible, that I could not accept the offer he had done me the honor to make—that I was plighted to another. I shall never forget the reply to that letter—its manly tone—its patient sorrow—its Christian fortitude:—

"My fondly cherished hopes are perished," he said—"a pleasant dream has passed forever away. I am *human*, and I *suffer*; but, I believe in *God*, and would bow meekly to *His* will, who always doeth *well*. As for Margaret, may her life be happy, and he to whom her love is given, worthy of the gift."

I shed tears when I read it, and I have never read it since without tears. For a long time, I heard nothing of him; but, about two years after, while travelling, I became acquainted with a lady from the place where he resided. I made general inquiries for the Armstrong family, and finally spoke of Philip. She said

that for years, Philip Armstrong had been regarded as a man who would never marry; but that, two or three years before, he had built a handsome house, and furnished it, laid out a fine garden, shrubberies, &c., and that it was reported he was to marry a young lady from the east; but it seemed there was no truth in the story, as the house still remains unoccupied, except by an old woman, who has charge of it. It was rather strange, wasn't it?—a stranger telling me of the house that had been built for me, which I probably should never see. Soon after that, my father moved from my native place, and made a new home in the West. My engagement was a long one, as my husband was the carver of his own fortune. But, being at last established in business, about two years since we were married, and since then, have lived quietly and cosily in the pleasant house at the corner, with the big old elm before the door. And so, I have given you a little sketch of my history down to the time when "John's" eye fell on that "romantic advertisement."

And now, I must take up my story where I left off. Nearly a week passed after I had written that letter, and I began to hope that I would never hear from it, when one day John came in to dinner, with an ominous yellow envelope in his hand, and I could see that it was addressed in the handwriting of a lawyer.

"I should be glad to know, Mrs. Margaret Wallace, what legal correspondence you are carrying on, with some rascal or other in Boston? If you wish to get a divorce, you had better get me to do the business."

With these words, he threw the letter into my lap, and then seated himself at my side waiting to be enlightened as to the mysterious document. I would have given the world to have been by myself, but strove to conceal my agitation, and tried to open the letter carelessly, as though it was something I took but little interest in; but, my hands shook so that John noticed it, and said—

"A touch of the ague, Maggie?—or, is some old lover of yours turned up, to disturb your equanimity?"

At last, the envelope was opened, and the enclosures fell out—one a brief lawyer's letter—something in this wise:—

"MADAM:—We have the pleasure to inform you that by the will of Philip Armstrong, Esq. late of ———, Suffolk County, deceased, you are the rightful possessor of ——— thousand dollars in bank stock, and the house —"

grounds, furniture, plate, &c., formerly the residence of said Armstrong, in ———, Suffolk County.

"Awaiting your orders, we have the honor to subscribe ourselves  
Yours, &c.,  
"J. W. CLAPP, & Co."

The letter dropped from my hand to the floor, and I burst into tears, my usual resort when I don't know what else to do.

"What the 'deuce' is to pay now?" said John, snatching the cause of this disturbance, and proceeding to read it. He looked surprised as he commenced, astonished as he proceeded, and perfectly wonder-struck as he concluded. "Well done," said he, at last, "if this doesn't beat all my first wife's relations; (I cannot break him of those horrid slang phrases) but, I don't think I should shed many tears, if some old fellow should accommodate me with such a nice little legacy as this. But come, stop crying, now, for I want to know the meaning of this little affair. Perhaps this will throw some light on the subject," and he picked up the other enclosure, which was a sealed envelope, with simply "Margarette," on the outside. But I took it from him, with a fresh burst of sobs, and sought the privacy of my own room, where I read the last message from him who died loving me still. And this was it:—

"MARGARETTE:

"For I may call you 'Margarette' now, when I am fast passing beyond the sound of all earthly names. I do not know as these lines will ever reach you, though I trust that the means I shall direct my executors to take, may be successful. I have loved you faithfully and fervently for years. When I hoped that some day you would be my wife, I prepared a home for you—such a home as I thought you would be happy in—and although God willed that it should never be *our* home, I still wish it might be yours. Will you not accept it, and spend a part of your time there, for the sake of him who loved you to the end? And, Margarette, if God gives you sons, will you not call one Philip, that I may know in that other world (for I shall know it) that my name is often on your lips. And now, farewell! In the hereafter, there is no marrying or giving in marriage; but, I shall meet you there, Margarette—my Margarette."

I went back to my husband with an aching heart, and silently handed him the letter, and then, with hand close clasped in his, I told him all that I have told you; and, stout-hearted

man though he is, more than one tear rolled down his brown cheek, as he listened, though he could not help saying, in his characteristic way, that he didn't see what there was in me "to upset a fellow so; but, any way, it was a mighty good hit of mine, when I shivered at that pane of glass."

It is nearly two years since Philip died, and I am spending these summer months in the house he built for me. Nothing is lacking in the house or surroundings, that the most delicate and fastidious taste could desire. He was brought here in his last sickness, and it was here he died. I am writing in the library, and I find upon its shelves many books that I now remember expressing a preference for, and in some of them marked—by whose pencil, I cannot doubt. On a cushion at my feet lies my beautiful boy, "Philip Armstrong Wallace," and I think my husband, (as well as I) loves him the better for his name. As I look upon him, in his innocent sleep, I pray God that he may grow into as noble a man as he whose name he bears.

The bay window, wreathed with vines and blossoms, opens into the garden he planned and laid out for me; and, looking beyond, to the distant hill-side, where sleep the dead, I see a marble shaft gleaming from out the dense foliage—he lies at its foot; and every evening we visit that grave, and leave fresh garlands there. When Philip grows larger, I shall take him there, and tell him of the good man who left his mother the beautiful home that will one day be his. My heart is full, when I think how the love of his noble heart has been lavished on me. I am utterly unworthy, but I thank *God* for it; and some day I hope to meet Philip Armstrong again; and then, I shall thank him for that *enduring love*, which now surrounds my life with so much beauty.

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## How he Met his First Love.

BY ROSELLA.

I almost felt ashamed of my ninetence-  
gingham dress, the day that Carrie Wharton  
and I went to M. together. She did appear  
so well in her rich, dark merino, the very  
kind I had always wanted, and I resolved  
to ask Harry to buy me a pattern like  
Carrie's.

After we got to M., we went shopping to-  
gether until Carrie had to go away to the  
milliner's, when I stepped into the dentist's, and  
promised to meet her in an hour at Fred  
Lane's office.

Carrie and Fred had been lovers once, and  
were engaged, but for some unaccountable  
reason the match was broken off, and within  
two years Carrie had wed the young doctor in  
our village, and Fred had married Deacon  
Hall's Lucy.

I don't tell it for truth, but I did hear that  
his love began to wane from a certain time in  
which he saw Carrie fixing back a little ring  
of a curl on her baby-sister's forehead, after  
the manner that cats wash their faces. Well,  
it was not very nice if she did moisten the  
rosy tips of her fingers in her pretty mouth;  
but we incline to think that he was rather  
fastidious.

I quite wish I had not commenced telling  
this, but it is for the good of you, girl readers,  
and I guess I'll brave all prudish fears and  
talk on, if Mr. Arthur will permit me.

Well, I was at Fred's office and had a good  
long chat with my old schoolmate—and still  
Carrie didn't come.

I stepped to the door to look for her; the  
chill autumn winds were whirling through  
the streets, carrying bits of paper and dust

in every direction, when there, turning the  
corner, just below us, came Carrie tripping  
along in great haste.

"I wonder if my heart will beat any faster  
when I meet my first love," said Fred, laugh-  
ing quietly.

"Come and see," I replied, and he came to  
the door, and just as his eye caught sight of  
her—whew! came the wind, and puffed the  
beautiful merino up in the air, and displayed,  
not a snow-white skirt fresh from the ironing  
table, but one, short and narrow, and of the  
faded, dingy color of a very old, worn-out hat  
lining! Whew! whew! came the boisterous  
winds round the corner, screaming out like an  
old virago, and the poor excuse of a skirt  
whisked to one side, showing another of wide  
striped, faded calico; and her hose, which  
were of that hue an old Irish woman preferred,  
"so near the color of dirt, that real dirt  
wouldn't show."

"What a charming landscape!" I said, turn-  
ing quickly to a picture of woody hill-sides,  
skirted by a ferny valley, through which the  
limpid-waters flowed.

"Very beautiful!" he replied, "it always  
rests me to take a good look at that."

"Fred," said a sweet voice, and there stood  
his little wife with a parcel in her hand, which  
she left in his keeping until she returned from  
calling on a poor woman. As she went down  
the steps, a neat little foot and the clean hems  
of white skirts, peeped out in the veering  
wind.

"My precious, tidy little wife, Rosy!" and I  
read in those earnestly spoken words, and in  
the compressed lips and clear depths of his  
eyes, great joy and thankfulness that *she* was  
his wife.

We cannot see how a woman who is careless  
and slatternly in her attire, can respect her-  
self—cannot see how she can be at all refined,  
or pure minded, and womanly, if she only  
cares for a good outside appearance.

This little sketch is truer, girls, than it is  
pretty; let the thoughts it will suggest have an  
abiding place in your minds.

# Life in the Parsonage,

## EAST AND WEST.

BY CLARA GRAHAME.

Most stories end in a wedding—mine shall prove an exception to the general rule, and begin with one. The harvest moon was full on that October night when gentle Fanny Page was married to Horace Warner, the young and newly-settled minister of the "Old South" church in Garland—one of those charming villages that nestle so fondly among the hills of New England.

In this case, "the course of true love had run smooth." In family circles, in stores, in Squire Baxter's office, and at the "sewing-circle," the affair had been duly discussed, and everybody, even to Aunt Nancy Parker, who it was said had been crossed in love in her youth, and had *stayed cross* ever since, agreed that it was an excellent match. Fanny was loved by the whole parish, and Horace Warner couldn't be blamed for doing what everybody else did. And so, in the pleasant parlor of her father's house, where a few chosen friends were gathered, those solemn vows, making them one "till death do you part," were given and returned, and the loving daughter went forth from the home of her childhood, to be a loving and faithful wife to him who to her "was nearer than all others, and dearer."

The old parsonage, built in Parson Rogers's time, had been repaired and rejuvenated, repainted and refurnished, and now looked out from the gray old trees that surrounded it, as pretty and romantic a home as any young bride could desire.

It was well filled on this eventful evening, for the whole parish were gathered there to welcome their minister and his wife to their new home. As they stepped from the carriage, they were met at the gate by a band of young girls, who, singing a pleasant welcome, led the way to the house. All the rooms were brilliantly lighted, and made cheerful and gay by vases, and baskets, and garlands of bright autumn flowers. Fanny's furniture had been arranged in the most tasteful manner; books and engravings scattered about the open piano, and the fire briskly burning in the open fireplace, (for autumn nights will be cold in New England,) gave the house already a home-like appearance. In one corner stood a small table, covered with gifts to the bride. There was something from everybody—from the silver cake-basket, presented by Mrs. Squire Baxter, and the silver castor, by Mrs. Doctor



Loomis, down to the book-mark worked by little Susan Reed, the washerwoman's lame child. The Pastor's library had already been transferred from his room at the Widow Sawyer's to the study shelves, and a new library table, and most inviting looking study-chair, showed that his comfort was not uncared-for. After the usual bridal congratulations, which were heartfelt on the occasion, an elegant collation was served, and soon after the company dispersed, leaving many blessings and good wishes behind. And then in their new home the family altar was set up, and the newly-married knelt side by side, and with voices faltering with emotion, dedicated their united lives to the service of the Master.

Days and months glided swiftly by at the Parsonage; the bright-hued autumn leaves withered and fell. Winter came, and covered the shivering earth with her pure white robe. Spring buds were followed by summer blossoms, and these by autumn's golden fruits, and peace and prosperity dwelt with our friends in the old house among the trees. The minister was the idol of his people; he was daily declared to be "remarkably talented;" every Sunday young ladies might have been heard expressing the opinion that the sermon was "perfectly splendid;" and all acknowledged and remarked the purity and beauty of his daily walk and conversation.

To be sure, here and there one thought he came out rather too plain on the great moral evils of the day—he wasn't quite conservative enough to suit Deacon Clark, and Aunt Nancy Parker considered him a little too liberal—she *would* like some *real* doctrine, such as Parson Rogers used to give them; she'd about given up over hearing a good strong election sermon again. Amid praises and fault-finding, Horace Warner moved calmly on, "preaching Christ, and Him crucified." And the congregation loved to hear of that wonderful love which formed so large a part of his instructions; and many, while listening, began to feel it in their own hearts, and to know something of that "peace that passeth understanding."

There was very little dissension in the church in those days, and some old feuds, that had lasted so long that they had come to be almost part of the creed, were done away, and brethren who had been alienated for years, clasped each other's hands, while aged men and women, who had lived to see this blessed peace upon Israel, in tremulous tones, daily invoked God's blessing upon their young pastor.

Fanny, too, in her own sphere, was equally useful and beloved. She did not think it her duty to be president of every society—to "take the lead" of every female prayer-meeting, or to make herself particularly prominent in any respect; but she was interested in every good word and work; no one complained that she neglected them because they did not "live in style;" no sick-bed was unvisited; she had a smile and pleasant word for all; and she gave something more substantial than words or smiles, as Widow Brown and poor blind "Totter Day" could testify; for their hearts had more than once sung for joy during the long, cold winter, as the well-filled basket from the Parsonage made its appearance.

In the course of time, little voices were heard in the old house, and little feet pattered from room to room after mother, and even penetrated into "papa's" study; and as the little "hindering comforts" clung to them for protection, the hearts of husband and wife were knit more firmly and closely together.

And now the cloud, which will gather sooner or later over the fairest earthly Eden, appeared in the horizon; at first, so small that no apprehensions were felt from it. Horace had for several years been subject to a slight cough—so slight, that it passed almost unnoticed; but of late it had been increasing, and soreness of the lungs, and other alarming symptoms, warned him that consumption, that white plague of the North, might not be far distant. Upon consulting a physician, he was told that he must at once give up preaching, for awhile, at all events; and journeying, and rest from all professional labor, was recommended to him. He felt the decision to be right, but it was very hard for him to acquiesce in it. He had become warmly attached to his people, and hoped to live and die among them. But with unshaken trust in his blessed Master, he accepted this trial as coming from His loving hand. He felt it his duty to ask a dismissal from his pastoral charge; but the church would not listen to it, granting him instead, leave of absence for six months, his salary to be paid as usual.

And now, whither should he turn his steps? Providence seemed to answer this question for him. A year or two before, a member of his church had removed to the West, and made a home in one of the new settlements then rapidly springing up in Minnesota. Hearing of the ill-health of his former pastor, this gentleman wrote him a pressing invitation to come

to Minnesota, giving several instances where that climate had proved beneficial to persons similarly affected, and urging him to make his home with him for any length of time. Urged by his wife, and other friends, he accepted the invitation, and leaving Fanny, with her little ones, in her father's family, set forth with a heavy heart.

It was in the golden sunset of a September day, that, after a long and weary ride in a jolting stage-wagon, Mr. Warner reached the top of the hill, at the foot of which lay the little village of "Oak Glen," where his friend, Mr. Irving, resided. No more beautiful site for a town could have been chosen than this quiet valley, almost surrounded by forest-crowned hills. Through it a little stream wound its way, advancing and retreating like a coy and bewitching damsel; numerous oak openings, looking like the orchards planted by our grandfathers in good old New England, gave the country the appearance of being long settled. On the outskirts of the village, large fields stretched out, full of standing corn, not yet touched by the frost, and others dotted all over with sheaves of ripened wheat, and the promise of a most plentiful harvest.

The "settlement" was composed of about fifty buildings, not arranged with "Puritan" precision, but looking rather as though they might have been shaken from some mammoth pepper-box. Two or three log houses still remained, as relics of former pioneer experience, but the dwellings were mostly frames, and neatly built. Mr. Warner found his friend comfortably situated, and was most cordially received by the whole family, who could hardly realize that their beloved pastor was in their midst in very flesh and blood.

Careful and tender nursing, combined with the Minnesota climate and Minnesota appetite, soon worked a favorable change in the health of the invalid; he breathed more freely than he had done for months before, in the clear, invigorating atmosphere, and his cough almost entirely disappeared. There was no settled minister at Oak Glen, although there was an organized church of the denomination to which Mr. Warner belonged. There was occasional preaching at the school-house, by various wandering exhorters—many of them well-meaning but ignorant men, who had evidently mistaken their calling; and this was about all the religious instruction, if it could be called such, that the people enjoyed. There were quite a number of intelligent and educated people in

the place, all thirsting for such preaching as they had been accustomed to in their Eastern homes, and as soon as it was known that Mr. Warner was a clergyman, he received many urgent invitations to preach. As soon as his health would allow, he complied with their request for two or three Sabbaths, and he never had a more attentive congregation in his own church than were gathered in the red school-house at Oak Glen. Spring came, and with it longings for home—for the companionship of his beloved wife, and the familiar faces of his own flock. With renewed courage, and health again restored, he commenced preparations for his homeward journey; but when he made known his intentions, he was met by strong and unexpected opposition. They entreated him to remain with them; to become their pastor; pledging themselves to make every effort to furnish him a comfortable support. They thought that if he stayed with them it would not be long before they could build a church. His friend Mr. Irving, one of the town proprietors, offered him his choice of any three lots in his possession, for a house and garden. Mr. Warner was uninfluenced by all these inducements. His heart still yearned for home and friends—to minister again to his own flock; but, the question—Is it my duty to remain? Can I serve my Master to more purpose here than elsewhere? arose in his mind, not to be lightly answered.

Accustomed to confer with his wife on every subject, he wrote her a full statement of the whole matter, saying that he would abide by her decision; but if she felt willing to leave her friends, and accept the loneliness and perhaps privations of a new home, he should feel it his duty to remain. We do not need to ask her reply; it was that of a faithful, loving wife, and true Christian; we give a sentence or two:—

"Wherever the Master calls you, it is your duty to go, and remain there until He says—'Arise, and go hence!' Your people have sorrowfully accepted your resignation, have paid in full the last year's salary. You need not bear the fatigue and expense of a journey; I, with my father's help, can settle all our affairs here; when that is done, I will come to you with our children."

So, when June, with its birds and flowers, came once more, it found Fanny Warner at her husband's side, prepared willingly to take up the burden of life again, and to be to him as she had ever been—his life's greatest blessing.

For a short time, they boarded in Mr. Irving's family; but a frame house was soon put up, and by the first of September they were once more under their own roof. It was an unpretending little dwelling, standing on the bank of the stream, under a group of tall oaks, and overlooking the bridge that formed the entrance into the village; and it was the children's delight to watch the stage-coach, with its shining red wheels, as it clattered noisily over; and the strange looking emigrant wagons, with their canvas covers, and wild-looking children peeping out of the various rents, as they dragged wearily on. The house, inside and out, formed a striking contrast to the pretty home they had left. It consisted of one good-sized room, with a bed-room and a wee bit of a study opening from it, and a sort of rough kitchen at the back. One large room constituted the up-stairs; this for the present was to be partitioned into smaller apartments in true Western fashion—curtains and quilts forming the walls.

The floor of the sitting-room was covered by a home-made rag-carpet. Fanny had brought with her, her piano, book-case, and some choice engravings. These contrasted queerly with the unpapered walls and unpainted wood-work. Horace, having a mechanical as well as theological genius, had improvised bedsteads, tables and cupboards, while Fanny's ingenuity had contrived out of packing-boxes and furniture patch, several "ottomans" and a most comfortable lounge, as they possessed rather a limited number of chairs, being but *two* and a rocking-chair, all told. We will look in upon our friends for a moment, in their new home. Fanny sits by the window looking westward, with writing material before her; but every now and then she lifts her eyes to the gorgeous sunset clouds. (I wish you could see a Minnesota sunset.) Charley and Nellie are down on the bridge, watching the fishes as they dart swiftly about, and dropping pebbles into the water. Little black-eyed, yellow-haired Emma, the three-year-old baby, wearied with her day's "trotting to and fro," has fallen asleep at her mother's feet, her tiny hands filled with the bright prairie-blossoms she loves so much. Horace is at work in his garden—for ministers work, as well as preach for a living, in Minnesota. We need not ask where the half-finished letter on the open port-folio, is going. Her thoughts are continually wandering Eastward, and every leisure moment is employed in writing to the loved ones there. While she is looking at the

clouds, we will venture to look over her shoulder, and tell you what she has written.

"OAK GLEN, SEPTEMBER, 185—

"MY DEAR MOTHER—Am I really two thousand miles away from you all? or do these broad prairies—this little village—exist only in my imagination? Everything seems so strange in this new life of mine, that I should almost doubt my own identity, were it not for my strong longings for you and my old home, that assure me that I am *I, myself*, and not another. We are once more settled in our own home, and I wish you could look in upon us to-night; our surroundings are very simple and primitive, still we have many comforts.

"I must tell you how very capable I have become—you know you never considered me remarkably 'faculized.' I always depended upon you for everything that required ingenuity; but necessity is a wonderful teacher, and excels in bringing out rare and hidden traits of character. You remember the piece of patch I brought from home; with that and a few old boxes and pieces of board, I have extemporized all sorts of furniture—a lounge, ottomans, a bureau, toilet table, work stands. Horace looks at me with perfect admiration and amazement—his faith in my powers of invention is unlimited. I should not be surprised at his coming some day with some pieces of wood and a quantity of patch and ask me "if I could take time during the day to build him a church." And that reminds me that I must tell you of the first Sabbath service I attended here. It was the first Sunday after my arrival. Horace had gone to Deerfield, about six miles away, where he preaches every other Sabbath. There was a quarterly meeting being held at the school-house, and Mrs. Irving offered to accompany me if I would like to. You have seen a country school-house, mother, in New England, and I need not describe this, for western ones are built in the same inconvenient, uncomfortable style. It was a strange scene to me, and for a time, anything but solemn; part of the congregation was from the village, these were mostly intelligent looking and well dressed; but the people generally came from off the prairies in big farm wagons, forming a motley gathering of all ages and sizes. As to fashion, many of their garments might have come out of the ark, and been preserved and handed down through all succeeding generations.

"Babies were scattered through the house in reckless profusion. I counted thirteen, (one

woman brought a splint-bottomed rocking-chair, and rocked hers vigorously through the whole service) and six dogs; when the benches were all filled, men and boys brought in sticks and blocks of wood, upon which they seated themselves with apparent enjoyment. You know I always had a weakness for laughing when I ought not to, and the whole affair seemed so ridiculous to me, that when two or three *colts*, that had been playing and capering around the house, came to the door and looked demurely in, I could restrain myself no longer, but laying my head on the desk before me, laughed till I cried, much to the mortification of Mrs. Irving, and the amazement, I doubt not, of the good sisters around me. The exercises opened with a familiar hymn, and while it was being sang, (it was not a well trained choir,) I made myself miserable with thinking where I had last heard it, and contrasting our own church, with its carpeted aisles and cushioned pews—its high-bred, refined congregation—with my present surroundings. I forgot that God's presence is not confined to costly and stately edifices—that He has promised to bless humble and contrite hearts, wherever they may be gathered. I indulged in such wicked and rebellious feelings until the Presiding Elder—a plain looking, plain dressed man—arose. I carelessly turned my head from him, determined that he was not worth my attention; but his earnest, fervent prayer, aroused my better feelings, and with a penitent heart I listened to his words. He took for his text these most blessed of all the Master's words—'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' His sermon was a plain, unpretending exhortation to 'come to Jesus.' His heart seemed full of love to Christ and his fellow men. After the sermon the Sacrament was administered, the communicants kneeling in front of one of the long benches, while the minister distributed the sacred emblems, saying a few words to each one. As he presented me the cup, saying, 'Drink this, my sister, in remembrance of Christ's blood that was shed for thee,' I felt that he was indeed a brother in Christ, and that however outward circumstances might differ, *all* who love our Lord were indeed one in Him. That little school-house has worn a different aspect to me since that day. Horace preaches there every alternate Sabbath; many of his congregation are intelligent, with minds well cultivated, who rejoice once more to hear sermons calculated to enlighten and instruct them. I have already received much kindness

from them, although I do not yet feel really acquainted with any except Mrs. Irving, whom I have long known and loved at home. I hope Horace may do much good here; if I can only know that his labors are being blessed to those around us, I shall be willing to spend my life here, hard as it is to be separated from you.

"Horace is so strong and well you would hardly know him; he delights in out-door labor, and the beauty of his white hands—(you know I was a little proud of them)—has departed. The people in this place and Deerfield think they can raise two hundred dollars a year, the missionary society pledges as much more. We shant have much left for fancied wants; but by strict economy we hope to live comfortably. Good-by, dear mother,

"Your own FANNY."

Two years passed, bringing much toil and many bitter trials and privations to our friends at Oak Glen. Fanny had been entirely unaccustomed to hard labor, and her slender frame soon began to show the effects of it, for help was difficult to obtain, and the minister's purse was a light one. Horace himself worked early and late—in the pulpit on the Sabbath, and during the week performing all sorts of miscellaneous labor—attending to his garden, cutting and drawing his own wood, taking care of his pigs and chickens, cows and horses, (you must remember I am writing of a *western* minister now,) and studying till long after midnight, preparing pure "beaten oil" for the Master's service. They often longed for their eastern home and friends—for the companionship of intellectual and highly cultivated minds, such as they enjoyed there—for the religious gatherings and anniversaries they used so to delight in. Yet they were not without sources of happiness; they had found kind friends—Mr. Warner's health had been restored; and more than all, he had already seen some fruit of his labors. Some through his instruction had become disciples of his blessed Master.

But suddenly hard times, in stern reality, came upon them; the harvest of 185— was almost an entire failure; the crops of the year before were nearly sold—money was not to be had; many families lived that winter almost entirely on corn meal, and all more or less shared the general distress. Of course this state of affairs bore heavily upon the minister and his family; most of his people depended upon their crops to pay their subscription—these had failed, and they had nothing else to turn to. The missionary society, straitened by the great

demand from western ministers, failed to send their regular remittance, and a winter of hardship and want seemed before them. They were all handsomely and plentifully clothed when they left Garland, but their garments not being like those of the "children of Israel" would and did "wax old," and their wardrobes all needed thorough replenishing. In the early autumn another little one had been sent them, and Fanny, in delicate health, was poorly prepared for the piercing cold of a Minnesota winter. But we will turn for a little while to a brighter picture.

In a cheerful parlor of one of the two story houses of Garland, are gathered a goodly number of ladies, young and old; a good deal of pleasant talk seems going on, while nimble fingers are flying swiftly, giving finishing touches to numerous garments, of all shapes and sizes. A large box stands open in the middle of the room, and several young girls are kneeling around it, some folding the completed articles, and others packing them nicely away; all seem strangely interested and excited, even to two or three little girls, who came with their hands full of dolls and toys, and clamor for room in the box.

"How I wish I could be there when they open this box," said sunny-eyed Annie Spencer. "Wont they be surprised, though? Mrs. Warner will laugh and cry at the same time. I do hope it will get there just at Christmas."

"I know Fanny will shed some tears," said good motherly Mrs. Russell, "if she's anything like me, for I always cry when I'm happy," and she must have been happy then, for two big tears rolled down her cheeks, and fell on the nice soft merino wrappers she was placing in the box—only the angels know that she had denied herself a really needed article of dress for the sake of purchasing them.

"I wonder if they are really poor?" said Kate Chester. "Fanny's letters seem sad sometimes, but she never complains. Why couldn't they have known when they were well-off, and stayed here, where everybody loved them and they had everything to make them happy?"

"I think they are happy now; if they suffer it is for Christ's sake, and I know Mr. Warner would be willing to endure any hardship and privation if he can win souls to Christ by so doing," and Mary Olmstead's sweet face glowed as she spoke, for she remembered her pastor's loving instructions, as a few years before he had tenderly led her to the Saviour's

feet, and how his warm heart ever rejoiced over repenting sinners.

But the box is filled now—literally crammed with tokens of loving remembrance, and we must hasten back again and wait for its arrival.

It is Christmas eve; there is little change in the house at Oak Glen since we first looked in upon it, except that the unpainted wood has lost its newness, and the plaster in some places has loosened from the walls. Mr. Warner sits silently by the stove, while Fanny, with her baby asleep on her lap, is patiently mending her husband's best coat, that looked as though its "better days" were far in the past.

The children had gone to their beds in the next room, but their voices were still heard in animated conversation.

"Charley," says Nellie, "it's Christmas tomorrow."

"Well, what if it is," answers master Charley.

"I don't think it'll do us much good. What fun we used to have Christmas when we lived in Garland. I always had lots of presents then; one year I got a great big rocking horse—I wish I had him here now, I'd soon be out of this old place."

"Why, Charley, you couldn't go on a rocking horse if you had it, and besides I heard father say that God sent us here, and if He did, He wouldn't like to have us go away till He is ready to have us go—I do wish I could have a new doll though; my old Dinah's nose is broken off, and one of her eyes is out. Mother says God hears us when we pray, and I'm going to ask Him if He wont please just to send me a new doll. I hope if He does it will have blue eyes—Dinah's were black before the paint got rubbed off."

"Put in for a book for me while you're about it—a real good one, about soldiers and battles. I shall be a general when I grow up. I'm going to sleep now," and soon Charley's long drawn snores and Nellie's gentle breathings told that dolls and books were alike forgotten in the dreamless sleep of childhood.

While the children were talking, the father and mother looked sadly at each other; for every Christmas eve before this had found them preparing some little gifts for their children. That the day which brought the blessed Christ child to earth, that wonderful "gift to men," might be a happy and joyous time.

"Don't look so sadly, dear," said Fanny, in answer to her husband's unspoken thought. "There's many a merry Christmas in store for

us yet. I've thought a good deal to-day of what good old Deacon Grant used to say so often, 'man's extremity is God's opportunity,' and though this coat is a little the worse for wear, still you are not as badly off as poor brother Smith; you know he had to wear his wife's woollen shawl to conference, and that makes me think that I must try and fix up that old overcoat, it will keep off a little of these prairie winds at any rate."

"You have a wonderful faculty for catching sunbeams, darling, (that was just the word he used, and they had been married ten years,) and I thank God every day of my life for you; the clouds seem pretty thick around us just now, but there must be light behind them somewhere; we have never gone hungry to bed yet, though many families not far from us have. I think if we trust our Father, he will not let us suffer."

The candle by this time had burned low—the coat was laid away—the evening prayer offered—and all was silence in the little house under the Oaks.

Morning came, bright and clear; the snow lay white and pure on the ground, and the myriad tiny icicles on the trees glittered like diamonds in the sunlight. Mr. Warner had gone out to his wood lot, and the sound of his constantly falling axe told that he was hard at work. Little Lucy lies asleep in the cradle. Mrs. Warner is busy with her morning work, while Nellie, Emma and the "Malty" kitten are having a nice play on the carpet. Suddenly Charley rushes in, waking the baby and shouting—

"O mother, mother! there's a team coming into our yard and a great big box—do come and look, mother."

And sure enough, there is the very box we saw in that parlor in Garland, and two men are exerting all their strength to lift it from the sled and carry it to the house.

"I think there must be some mistake," said Mrs. Warner, as it was deposited in the middle of the floor.

"No mistake marm, if you're the Rev. Horace Warner, that is to say, Miss Warner; there's the name all lettered out plain; things from your folks 'back East,' I reckon. Merry Christmas to you, marm. Good day," and there they all stood in silent amazement, till little Nellie exclaimed—

"O, I know now, mother; it's the things I prayed for, but I didn't think they'd take such a big box."

"That's it Nell," cried Charley. "Oh! I'm glad you thought of it; give us a hammer, and we'll soon see what's in it;" but Charley found that his strength wasn't quite equal to the undertaking, and so he perched himself on the top of it, until he saw his father coming with his axe on his shoulder, when he ran to meet him.

"O Father, come quick; Nelly prayed and the things have come—and it's a big box, with your name on it—and we can't open it—and the man brought it—and—O, do hurry!" Mr. Warner himself, a little excited, quickened his steps, and soon the box was opened and its varied contents displayed.

A card lay on the top, with a "Christmas gift from Garland," inscribed on it; and then what discoveries were made—what treasures brought up from its depths. A whole suit of clothes for father, (he wouldn't have to preach in the old coat any more,) including half a dozen nice shirts, and a warm new overcoat; such a pretty winter bonnet for mother—dark green satin, with crimson strings and face trimmings; a new merino dress, collars, handkerchiefs, gloves, whole suits for all the children, not forgetting the baby, that is always to be found in well-regulated ministers' families; under clothes, bed and table linen; yes, and there comes the doll, and a little bedstead besides, and one of Abbott's Histories, with its bright red cover, for Charley; a set of wooden cups and saucers for Emma, and a basket of sugar plums besides; but I couldn't begin to tell all, only I mustn't forget, that when they came to the bottom there lay a sealed envelope, with *one hundred dollars* in it from the young men of Garland.

Good Mrs. Russell was right. Fanny did shed a good many tears, and the minister's eyes looked very misty; and then came the desire that all Christians feel in sudden joy or sorrow—they must go and tell the Lord. "Let us pray," said the good man, and they all knelt down, and if ever real thanksgiving arose from earth, it went up from those full, overflowing hearts. I think the children learned then what real prayer was; and little Emma, whose ideas of devotion were confined to the nightly exercises at her mother's knee, clasped her little hands and repeated, "Now I lay me," in a most audible whisper. In the midst of that Christmas tide of joy and gratitude we will leave our friends, feeling that He whose loving kindness faileth never, will be with them even unto the end.

## MAY.

The birds and the buds sing and swell with their own story. After long waiting—for we always wait long for May, through weary days of mist and leaden cloud, through dull, chill days, when there is no promise in sky or earth, she is here at last, with the ravishing joy of sunlight in her face—with the sweet and precious promises on her lips; for May is the year's poet of promise, and she sings to us of the flowers and the fruits—of the gold and yellow flagons of tallips—of the great rubies of roses—of the stars of daisies—of the drowsily swinging bells—of honeysuckle—of the purple enamelling of mignonette—of the azure shells of violets—and, most wondrous of all, the great, luscious, stately lilies, born in the waters, and sleeping on the stream, and making great lakes of white pearl in July moonlight.

And she sings to us, too, this poet of promise, of the sweet nectars of fruit that lie in the budding branches and the kindling vines—of berries which shall hang their pendants of ruby and jet among the green leaves—of the great round goblets of apples, whose cheeks shall be burned into russet and crimson by the long kisses of the summer—of the pears, that shall drop their great vases of green and gold on the autumn grass—of the peaches, whose velvet cups shall be scarred with flames caught from September suns; and of the purple plums, which hang in royal ripeness among the leaves. And these are the promises that May sings, amid the sweet laughter of her eyes and lips, for her muse is a joyous one; and the bays of the year's morning wave fresh and green on her dewy forehead.

Her path is the path of the victor, for the winter has gone to its silent palaces in the far off Arctic—gone silent, chained, conquered; and May has arisen, and sings the victories of the spring—the promise of the summer!

V. F. T.

## "WOUNDED AND KILLED."

It takes but a little space in the columns of the daily papers; but, oh! what long household stories and biographies are every one of these strange names that we read over and forgot.

"Wounded and killed!" Some eye reads the name to whom it is dear as life, and some heart is struck or broken with the blow made by that name among the list.

It's our Henry, or our John, our James, or our Thomas, that lies with his poor broken limbs at the hospital, or white, still and ghastly face on the battle field. Alas! for the eyes that read; alas! for the hearts that feel!

"He was my pretty boy, that I've sung to sleep so many times in my arms!" says the poor mother, bowing her head in anguish that cannot be uttered. "He was my brave, noble husband, the father of my little orphan children!" sobs the stricken wife. "He was my darling brother, that I loved so, that I was so proud of," murmurs the sister, amid her

tears; and so the terrible stroke falls on homes throughout the land.

"Wounded and killed." Every name in that list is a lightning stroke to some heart, and breaks like thunder over some home! and falls a lung, black shadow upon some hearthstone.

It is a year that we have seen those lists from time to time in the newspapers. God be thanked that they have been as few and short as they have; and God be thanked that we seem now to be walking on the hills of the morning, and that we say to each other in hopeful voices, "when the war is over."

We look off to the future, not as we did last May, with fear and shuddering, but with hope and trust; that the thunder of the cannon, the tramp of the soldier, the flash of arms, and the beating of drums, shall soon be over in our land; and that we shall sit down under our own vine and fig tree, a nation unbroken, united and free!

V. F. T.

## "JANUARY AND MAY."

We cannot say much as to the attractiveness of our steel engraving; but, the most attractive things do not always convey the highest lessons. The maiden, tempted for gold or position to waste the sweet wine of her young life in a marriage with frosty age, will think more soberly touching the realities of such a union, after looking at our illustration. The artist has done his work well.

The fine poem, "To Give is to Live," published in our March number, was written by Rev. H. W. Parker, of New Bedford, Mass., and originally appeared in the Boston Congregationalist. We did not know its authorship when we copied it into the Home Magazine.

## A CONTRAST.

Professor Hart, in his sensible address on the "Mistakes of Educated Men," draws this instructive contrast between two classes of men who are to be met with in all communities. He says:—

"There are two friends, gentlemen of large means, whose estates and whose annual incomes are about equal. One of these is always short of money, buys everything on credit, and on the longest credit he can command, often when travelling has to borrow money to take him home, and really has to make as many turns and shifts to get along as if he were poor. All simply because he lives just twelve months on the wrong side of fortune. The other man, whose annual income and expenses are about the same as those of his neighbor, never has an open account, buys everything for cash, always has plenty of money in his pocket, and a plenty more in bank, and is apparently without a care in the world, so far as money is concerned. All simply because he lives just twelve months on the right side of his income. The two men have equal resources. In the course of their lives they spend about equal amounts. Yet the one is always poor and harrassed, the other is always rich, and at his ease."

## Murmuring.

BY MRS. STEPHENSON.

I was tired of washing dishes; I was tired of drudgery. It hadn't always been so, and I was dissatisfied. I never sat down a moment to read, that Jamie didn't want a doughnut, or a piece of paper to scribble on, or a bit of soap to make bubbles. "I'd rather be in the penitentiary," I said one day, "than have my life teased out so," as Jamie knocked my elbow, when I was writing to a friend.

But a morning came when I had one plate less to wash—one chair less to set away by the walls in the dining-room; when Jamie's little crib was put away in the garret, and it has never come down since. I had been unusually fretful and discontented with him that damp November morning that he took the croup. Gloomy weather gave me the headache, and I had less patience than at other times. By and by he was singing in another room, "I want to be an angel," and presently rang out the metallic croup cough. I never hear that hymn since that it don't cut me to the heart; for the croup cough rings out with it. He grew worse towards night, and when husband came home, he went for a doctor. At first, he seemed to help him; but it merged into inflammatory croup, and was soon over.

"I ought to have been called in sooner," said the doctor.

I have a servant to wash the dishes now, and when a visitor comes, I can sit down and entertain her, without having to work all the time. There is no little boy worrying me to open his jack-knife, and there are no whittlings over the floor. The magazines are not soiled with looking at the pictures, but stand prim and neat on the reading-table, just as I leave them.

"Your carpet never looks dirty," say weary worn mothers to me. "Oh, no," I mutter to myself, "there's no muddy little boots to dirty

it now." But my face is weary as theirs—  
weary with sitting in my lonesome parlor at twilight—  
weary with watching for the little arms that used to twine around my neck—for the curls that brushed against my cheek—for the young laugh that rang out with mine, as we watched the blazing coal-fire, or made rabbits with the shadow on the wall, waiting merrily together for papa coming home. I have the wealth and ease I longed for, but at what a price? And when I see mothers with grown-up sons driving to town or church, and my hair silvered over with gray, I think what might have been, had I murmured less at the providence of God, Reader—  
young mother you may be—had you heard this mother tell her story, you would have felt to say with the writer—"I will be more patient with my little ones—I will murmur less."

CARROLL CO., ILL.



**NO RIGHT TO BE UGLY.**

So says the London Review, and thus sustains its assertion:—

Men or women, whatever their physical deformities may be, cannot be utterly ugly, except from moral and intellectual causes, and neither man nor woman has any right to be ugly; and that if either be so, it is his or her fault, misdemeanor, or crime; and that, being ugly, they cannot expect the love of their fellow creatures. No man can love an ugly woman; no woman can love an ugly man; and if fathers and mothers can love an ugly child, it is a very sore strnggle, and may be a duty after all, and not love.

To have lost one's nose or eye, to squint, or to have a hump-back, are certainly misfortunes, deteriorations of the beauty of the human form, and impairments of its high ideal; but if all these calamities were centered in one unhappy person, they would not make him positively ugly, if he were wise, witty, amiable, benevolent, just and generous, and passed his life in deeds of kindness and charity.

Milton has not endowed his sublime fiend with the horns, dragon's tail, and other vulgar uglinesses of popular superstition. He was too great a poet and philosopher to fall into such an error. The physical beauty of his Satan was originally as great as that of the angels who had not fallen in all outward attributes; but the hideousness was in the mind, and the mind moulded the body to its own character; and Satan, though he was, as Sydney Smith said, "a fine fellow" in one sense was terribly ugly in another—sublimely horrible, and infinitely more fearful to think of than the grotesque compound of Satyr and Dragon, whom we owe to the exuberant fancy and bad taste of the monks of the middle ages.

A truly ugly person may have had a well developed nose, and regular features; he may be six feet high, and shapely as the Apollo Belvidero; but the evil spirit that is in him has set the indescribable but palpable seal of a bad mind upon all his physical lineaments. He bears the brand of criminality upon his forehead as Cain did, and carries a mark of Divine displeasure stamped upon his face, shaded

in his aspect, toned in his voice, telegraphed into his looks and gestures. By these means he is pointed out to his fellow creatures, as one who has sinned against the moral government of the universe, so that all who see him may know him, and take warning by his punishment. All that is morally good, is physically beautiful—all that is morally bad, is physically ugly; *ergo*, every man and woman may be beautiful if they like, and no man or woman has a right to be ugly.

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## "Only a Friend."

BY VIRGINIA F. TOWNSEND.

"Julia, do you intend to marry that man?"

The lady to whom this direct question was addressed, had just sauntered back from the front door, to which she had gone to take leave of a guest, and she seemed slightly startled, perhaps embarrassed, but her answer was to the point, "No, Aunt Hope. I have no idea that I shall ever be the wife of John Norwood."

"But I think the young man *loves* you?"

There was no answer, at least with words. Julia Dexter stood by the table twirling a small pair of scissors around the small joints of her fingers; her aunt looked up from her sewing to her niece's face and read an answer there; not an entirely pleased, or triumphant one; there was a little uneasiness mixed with it.

"You think just as I do, Julia."

"Well, Aunt Hope, I will not deny it," returning her aunt's gaze with a little smile, which was on the whole, a frank and steady one.

"And I believe this young man expects, at the least hopes, you will be his wife."

"No, Aunt Hope, he does not,—at least it is not my fault, if he does, for I have told him plainly, that though I value him very highly as a friend, I had no feeling for him which warranted me in being more."

"But you still encourage his addresses."

"No, he only visits me as a friend, knowing perfectly my feelings towards him."

Mrs. Hope Stanley laid down her sewing and surveyed her niece, with an intense, half-mournful expression.

"Julia, do you tell me that you are fully convinced that Mr. Norwood cherishes no hope, no fancy that you will ever be his wife?"

The scissors flashed in rapid revolutions around the dainty fingers.

"Ye-es, aunt, at least, as I said, I have told him frankly, and it is his fault not mine, if he does not understand that I receive his visits only as a friend."

The elder lady shook her head.

"And I say, my dear Julia, that, *as a friend*, you ought not now to receive his visits, at least not to accept his attentions."

Julia Dexter started, and her fair face flushed a little.

"What, not when we perfectly understand each other?"

"If I comprehend your reply, Mr. Norwood has proposed to you?" asked Mrs. Stanley, avoiding a direct reply to her niece.

"Yes."

"And you have refused him?"

"Yes."

"You think him, however, an estimable young man; one whom it would be wrong in anywise to trifle with?"

"Most certainly I do, Aunt Hope. John Norwood is a good, a noble fellow; honorable, and generous hearted to the core; intelligent and agreeable too, as you have seen. I do not love him; he does not realize my ideal of the man I could marry; but I esteem him above any gentleman who visits me."

"Well then, Julia, I have only to repeat my remark, you have no right to receive attentions, because it is doing him a wrong."

"I don't see *how*, Aunt Hope?"

"Because it is only keeping alive in his heart a hope which can never be realized. You know, I know, everybody who had the slightest penetration, and saw you together for half an hour, would perceive that this young man was enamored of you; and it is wrong to indulge him with your society when it only stimulates an affection, which by your own showing, you cannot reciprocate. It is only weaving about his heart those chains which it may cost him, you know not how much of suffering and agony to break."

"Dear me, Aunt Hope," said the girl, with a shrug of her pretty, sloping shoulders, though her face looked serious, "you fairly make me shudder! What *shall* I do!"

"Break off this acquaintance at once; for, disguise it my dear child, to yourself, with what pretty sophistries you may, *love of admiration* is at the bottom of all this. You smile upon this young man, you receive his attentions, you talk and jest with him; he looks in your face, and feeds anew the idolatry with which he regards you. It is not enough to say that he understands your true sentiments; while you treat him as you did this morning, the man *will* have hope, and the truer and nobler he is, the harder at last will it be to surrender you."

"I never looked at it in this light before."

Julia Dexter spoke half to herself, this time, slowly revolving the scissors around her fingers.

"I dare say not," somewhat sadly subjoined Mrs. Stanley, resuming her sewing, and stitching rapidly a few moments, then dropping her work, she continued with an earnestness that flushed her faded cheeks, and lent a strange charm to her grave, gentle face. "I cannot understand how it is, that so many of my sex are so culpably to blame, in their social relations with men. They talk and jest, and what is a thousand times worse, they *act* as if a man's heart were a thing mostly created for their amusement. I have seen women, generous, true and conscientious, lovely in all other respects, totally blind, utterly at fault in this one."

"Do you know, Julia Dexter, that it is a serious thing, and one for which God holds us accountable to trifle with another's affections?"

"I am not trifling with John Norwood," asseverated Julia Dexter, with strong feeling in every word she uttered. "I should scorn, Aunt Hope, to carry on a flirtation with any man."

"Call things by their right names, my child! Be honest with yourself, and acknowledge that every charm and every grace which you may possess is only a snare to him; and remember that when a woman satisfies herself she cannot accept a man, that the separation betwixt herself and him ought to be entire, so long as her presence and society holds the old charm and influence over him. It cannot safely be otherwise; and for myself, I would sooner part with my right hand than feel that because of any vanity, or any thoughtlessness of mine, I had broken a man's heart, or blighted his happiness for life."

"But, aunty, your ideal of men is so high, just after your own pattern. Their hearts are not so easily broken or their lives blighted, as you imagine."

"But they are sometimes; and it is very shallow logic to excuse one's own faults, because of other people's."

"I know it, Aunt Hope, and I am sorry that I accepted Mr. Norwood's invitation to ride over to the mills with him this afternoon."

"Let it be the last time, Julia. You owe it to yourself and to him to make this separation entire."

"But I *do* hate to lose John as a friend, aunty. I like his society, and it's dreadful dull out here, sometimes."

"I am sorry; but I should not be a very

desirable aunt if I would counsel my niece to do wrong, because it was pleasanter."

It was a smile, sweet and touching in its solicitous tenderness, which was now lifted to the face of Julia Dexter. She was very fond of her aunt, generous and impulsive withal, and she sprang forward and threw her small, white arms about the lady's neck, exclaiming—

"Well, Aunt Hope, your niece would be a very unworthy one, if, with such a counsellor, she did not do the right, *and she will!*"

At that moment Doctor Dexter, the father of Julia, entered the room to tell his sister and daughter that the dahlia's for which they had been watching for several days, had opened after the last night's rain; and the ladies hurried out to see the blossoms, and the subject of their last half hour's conversation was dismissed.

Julia Dexter was an intelligent and unusually interesting girl, in the twenty-fourth spring of her life. If she had not positive beauty, she had grace and expression which were far more attractive. Her face was a bright, sweet one; and her conversational powers, her natural sprightliness, and adaptation, made her a singular favorite with gentlemen.

She was aware of all this, but the knowledge had not spoiled her. Heart, conscience, principles, she possessed all these; but she had large approbateness, and she was too fond of admiration.

Julia was an only child, and for ten years her father had been a widower, and he never saw a fault in his darling, and indulged her lightest whim. No one can be surrounded constantly with an atmosphere of admiration and flattery, without some moral enervation following, as the necessary result, and Julia Dexter had not escaped the influences of such a nurture.

Still her instincts for truth and right were very strong, and her father's sister, who exchanged a visit with her every year, exerted a most healthful influence over the blossoming years of her niece's life.

Mrs. Hope Stanley was a noble, Christian woman—a woman who in daily life strove to realize her highest ideals; one whose nature sorrow had exalted and clarified. She had passed the meridian of her life; but down among the still valleys of old age would Mrs. Hope Stanley carry the fresh flowing sympathies of her youth; and though the husband of her girlhood, and the two sweet children which had gladdened them awhile, were in Heaven before her, she walked under the shadow of

that great grief with a serene spirit toward the home-roof of the Father.

Mrs. Stanley had never met the young merchant, John Norwood, until that morning; for though he had been for two years a visitor at her brother's, it happened that he was absent from the city when the lady was with her niece, the previous year.

He was a young man of most pleasing address, a favorite with all who knew him; generous, confiding, with deep and pertina-

cious affections. It never entered the heart or mind of Julia Dexter that she was in anywise responsible, because that these affections had been lavished on her. She was just the style of woman to suit John Norwood, and she could not help being pleased with his society.

Still she always felt a lack of strength and force in his character, which excluded any deep regard on her part, for Julia Dexter was one of those women whose heart demanded these in the man she should marry.

Her husband must, to her imagination, be a hero, and this John Norwood, with his graceful person, and pleasing social gifts, would never be. But Julia was too kind-hearted, and really thought too much of the young man to wound him more than was necessary, and her sympathies were greatly stirred when she saw the agony her refusal cost him.

It was a very gentle, yet to do her justice, a decided one; but she made an egregious mistake, when she desired him to visit her at all times as a friend; a privilege of which he was only too glad to avail himself; so she and the lover she had refused were thrown constantly together, on terms of greater intimacy than ever.

He brought her flowers, and books, and fruits; he took her to ride, and to walk; he was her usual attendant at a sail, or party, or pic-nic; she sang for him her sweetest songs, and there was no week in which John Norwood did not visit her, and as Julia's home was a few miles from the city, the young merchant's carriage always remained for several hours at the front gate of the doctor's pleasant cottage; and yet all these things were done in the name of friendship; and Julia Dexter made herself believe that these relations were altogether harmless—that John Norwood understood her feelings, and there was nothing that should prevent his being her friend.

Of course there was not; but Julia Dexter knew very well that it was a moral impossibility for John Norwood to be more than this.

She read the utter refutation of her pretty, plausible sophistry in every tone of his voice, and every glance of his eyes, and she knew perfectly well that his heart still clung to the idol of its worship; but Julia Dexter was willfully blind. She would not see that the indulgence of her society was doing to John Norwood the cruellest wrong that a woman could do to a true and sincere man; and she did not look down into the silent chambers of her own soul, and see there how *vanity and love of admiration* was warping her judgment, and stimulating her to a course of action which the better part of her nature must have risen up and condemned. For the admiration of John Norwood was very pleasant to her. She knew very well the smiles and tones, the words and glances, which kept him at her side; and she knew too, that his heart could never be attracted towards any other woman, so long as she held her old influence over him; and yet because his adoration was so gratifying to herself-love, she permitted her victim to continue in her toils.

But Mrs. Stanley's plain, straightforward questions and arguments had aroused her niece's conscience, and it was with a pang of remorse she dressed herself for the ride she had promised to take with the young merchant that afternoon.

She heard the carriage stop at the gate, as she stood before her mirror, her head resting on her hand, and her conduct for the last year rising up before her in its real features, and appalling her with reproaches.

The moment after the carriage wheels had stopped, a young lady sprang up the stairs, and bounded into the room, where Julia stood before the mirror.

She was a brilliant, haughty looking girl, about Julia's age, dressed in that elaborate style which best suited her. She had a face which you might have admired, but not loved. "Why, Isabella!" exclaimed Julia, lifting her head from her hand.

"Aren't you glad to see me, Julia?"

"Very," was the cordial response.

"I met Mr. Norwood this morning, when I was out on a shopping tour," said the fair, haughty lady, throwing herself into a chair, and fanning herself with a rare sandal-wood fan; "and I availed myself of the opportunity to make all the inquiries about you that I could.

"The young gentleman informed me that he had made an engagement to ride over to the mills with you this afternoon, and invited me

to accompany you, thinking probably it would gratify you. But I accepted the invitation, and here I am. What makes you look sober, Julia?" and the bright eyes opened wide on the girl's face.

"Nothing that I can tell you, Isabel. Somehow I don't feel like taking this ride."

"Don't feel like taking it! What will Mr. Norwood say? You will break his heart."

"Don't say that, Isabel! Mr. Norwood and I are only friends;" and the look of seriousness deepened into pain.

"Well, all I've got to say, Julia Dexter, is, that it isn't John Norwood's fault if he is only your friend," watching the girl narrowly, as she arranged her thick, brown plaits of hair.

To Julia Dexter's honor be it recorded that she preserved inviolable the secret of John Norwood's affection for her, and that her friend had only suspected it from the young man's manner.

"Well, granting what you say is true, Isabel, it is not right to encourage his attentions;" and Julia spoke more to herself than to her auditor.

"Yes, it is right enough to receive them, if he knows your real feelings towards him, you absurd little puss. A woman may make a friend of her lover, without doing any harm I'm sure!"

"But maybe it is doing wrong to him—wrong if in anywise he indulges a hope which must end in bitterness and disappointment?" Julia's tones placed an interrogation point at the end of her sentence.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed her guest, with her light, quick, heartless laugh. "You are so squeamish, Julia Dexter. Men's hearts are tougher than you suspect, and they'll bear a little pressure, just like India rubber. Rest assured your lovers will not shoot or drown themselves, because you refuse them; and the best way generally is to smooth the denial as much as possible, and keep it out of sight in general. You don't know much about men, Julia."

And these words sank into the young girl's heart, and Julia Dexter asked herself if, after all, her friend's sentiments were not very near the truth.

Of course her Aunt Hope was the best and noblest woman in the whole world—everybody knew that; but then, her ideals of life and conduct were all so refined and exalted, that it was almost impossible to carry them out in every day practical life.

She wasn't going to disturb herself any more

about the matter. John Norwood knew just where she stood, and if he chose to visit her, it was his own fault. Men's hearts weren't so easily broken after all.

Julia Dexter's thoughts run on after this fashion as she arranged her shawl and hat before the glass, for her friend had excused herself, and gone down stairs to entertain the young merchant until Julia presented herself.

The two girls had been schoolmates, and the intimacy, commenced when they were children, had never been suspended.

Isabella Nichols was a brilliant, dashing girl, with no high ideals or standards of life; thoroughly worldly in all her pursuits and aims.

She was accomplished after the fashionable standard; she had grace, wit, and tact, but heart or high principles, very little.

Julia Dexter was vastly her superior in all the moral range of feeling and purpose; but the influence of a companion like Isabella Nichols over a young, impressible nature, could be only injurious, especially when its whole force was brought to bear on the weakest side of Julia Dexter's character; and this was approbateness, and love of admiration.

Mrs. Stanley left her niece in a few days after the conversation which we have recorded, and the subject was not renewed by the ladies—indeed, Julia avoided it.

John Norwood continued his visits as before, and they grew more frequent; for the year was falling into autumn, and Julia found her country home a little dull, for it was not always convenient to visit the city, and the visits and attentions of John Norwood became a sort of necessity, in the absence of any one who eclipsed him. Julia Dexter's conscience was not, however, always at ease. There were glances and pressures of the hand, at meeting and parting, which she could not misinterpret, and there were times when the shadow on John Norwood's forehead, and the involuntary sighs that crept up from his heart, told his hostess, as no words could have done, of the doubt and pain that wrung it.

But, on the whole, the young lover was usually cheerful, or full of high spirits, in the presence of his enchantress. How could he help living on the hope which all her actions kept alive, no matter what her words said? But, at last, the end came. Late in the winter, Julia Dexter met, on a brief visit to the city, a young lawyer, in whom she at once became interested.

The attraction was mutual, and in a few weeks, the young gentleman was a very frequent guest at her father's. John Norwood had been absent a month, and it so happened that he did not meet the young lawyer, or suspect the true state of things, for some time. But one evening, the two gentlemen met at the residence of Doctor Dexter. Love has singular acuteness, and, though his hostess was polite as ever, still, John Norwood felt there was an indescribable change in her manner, and that he was not, as heretofore, the most favored guest. He left early, and when Julia accompanied him into the hall, he said to her—

"You know we made an engagement last week, to go out into the woods, and gather trailing arbutus, some pleasant day this week; are you engaged to-morrow, Julia?"

"Yes, Mr. Norwood;" with a little fluttering in her cheek—"I have promised Mr. Paulding that I will ride down to the shore with him; so we must defer gathering the flowers to some other day."

"As you like." There was something hoarse and hard in the monosyllables, which made the girl look up in John Norwood's face. It was very white, and about the mouth, and in the eyes, there was a look of terrible suffering.

"What is the matter, John?" exclaimed the lady, in real alarm.

"Oh, Julia, you don't know!—you don't know!" and then, as if afraid to trust himself farther, he hurried away. But his hostess caught that last wild, almost frantic glance, that his eyes shot on her as they parted.

She could not misunderstand *that*, and a sharp pang smote the heart of Julia Dexter, and her fair face was uneasy and troubled, as she returned to the parlor.

"What is the matter?" asked the young lawyer, as he rose up, and took the small hands of his hostess, and looked earnestly and fondly in her face.

"Nothing; at least, nothing that I can tell you, Mr. Paulding;" and a bright smile chased the gloom from the brown eyes.

"Will you tell me whether this Mr. Norwood is a friend, or more than this?" for the young lawyer was ill at ease, on witnessing the evident familiarity of the lady and her guest.

"Oh, he is only a friend. We have known each other intimately for years, and of course, he feels quite at home here."

The lover was satisfied, and a little later,

Julia Dexter listened to words which were the sweetest her ear had ever caught, and which filled her heart, like the jubilant chime of marriage bells; and, in the first joy of her betrothal, there stole across her no memory of the true love she had wronged, or the heart that her carelessness and vanity had broken! But, that night in her dreams, the white, agonized face of John Norwood, rose, and stood before her; and, with a start, she woke up; and, in the darkness, her pillow was wet with tears of sorrow and self-reproach.

Two days later, the young merchant called on Julia again. It was an afternoon in the late May, full of fragrance, and of opening blossoms, and of all the joy of the year's awaking.

The young man looked worn and pale, as though he had gone through some sharp conflict during the last two days; but he said, with his old manner—

"I have come to take you to the woods, this time, and I can have no excuse, Julia."

"You must, Mr. Norwood, for I am expecting company."

Julia said this very reluctantly, for she disliked to pain the young man; but there was no help for it, and Mr. Paulding had assured her he should be with her before four o'clock.

"Julia, are you expecting Mr. Paulding this afternoon?"

Her face made answer before her lips did—

"I think he may be here."

"And are you going to marry that man?"

"It is too bad to question me in this way, Mr. Norwood," her bowed face, burning with its blushes.

John Norwood did not heed her words; he seized both her hands, and fairly crushed them in his own.

"Oh, Julia Dexter!" he groaned, in a voice that would have melted to pity a heart far harder than his listener's—"I had not suspected this!—I cannot believe it!"

"Why John, you distress me. Don't act so. You know I told you long ago that there was no hope."

"But I *did* hope, Julia Dexter. How could I help it, with your sweet face, that I was ready to fall down and worship, before me every few days, and your lips full of smiles, as your voice was full of welcomes. I was a fool, perhaps; but I couldn't help it, so long as you allowed me the blessed sight of you; and now—oh, Julia! I'm a proud man, and it's hard that you should see me like this; but it

would have been better if I had died—better if I had died!"

And, with those words, he gave her one wild, greedy look, threw his arms about her, and kissed her forehead over and over, and then he was gone, and Julia Dexter sat all alone, weeping the bitterest tears of her life.

And John Norwood mounted his horse, and dashed swiftly homeward. Alas! in that bitterest agony of his life, he had no faith in the great Love, that would have healed his broken spirit—he had made to himself an earthly idol, and when it was broken, he felt that in all the world there was no rest for his soul.

Madness had fired his heart and brain, and on his way home, his glance just grazed the still, deep river, its bright waters asleep between the fringes of swamp willows, and with that glance *his purpose was taken!* He hurried to his office, wrote a brief note to his widowed mother, and rode back to the banks of the river. There was a heavy plunge, and—may God have mercy upon the soul of John Norwood!

The news came to Julia Dexter as she sat with her lover that night, on the very sofa where she and John Norwood had passed so many pleasant hours together.

It was a terrible blow to her; still, the circumstances were not very accurately reported, and Julia believed that the young man had accidentally fallen into the river, and been drowned; but she passed a sleepless night, thinking of their last interview on earth. The next day, she received a message from Mrs. Norwood, the mother of the dead man, requesting that she would call on her before night.

Julia had only met the lady once, but she knew that John had often spoken of her to his mother, and she supposed that it was on this account that the afflicted woman desired to see her, and receive her sympathy; and, with a sad heart, the young girl rode over to the house of mourning.

"Come with me," said the stricken mother, after she had looked sternly a moment in Julia's face; and she led her into the next room, where he lay, as if in slumber, the dark locks clustering about his forehead, and the features settled into such white peacefulness, that it did not seem his young manhood had been thus suddenly stricken out of him. "He was all that I had in the world—my precious boy, and I loved him better than my own life, and *you have laid him there*, Miss Dexter!



"Don't start, and look at me so, now; you can't give me back my boy, for it's too late; but, if it hadn't been for you, his poor mother wouldn't be looking this day upon *his* dead face. You broke his heart, with your pretty face, and your bright, winning ways. I was afraid of it for a whole year; for I saw that he worshipped you, though he never said much about it; and I used to hint it sometimes; but there would always come a look into his face that I couldn't bear to see, and he would say—'Don't say *that*, mother; Julia Dexter would never let me visit her so, and treat me as she does, if she didn't care for me, no matter what she may *say*!'"

"But there he lies now, and I want you to feel that you've killed my boy and broken his mother's heart."

Mrs. Norwood was an old woman, and John was the youngest of the four boys over whom her mother-heart had poured the old cry of Rachel of Rama. Julia Dexter uttered no word, standing before the still face of the dead man; but her face was white as his. She went silently out of the house, but before she reached the carriage where her father waited for her, she fell in a swoon on the pavement stones.

For days afterwards they trembled for her reason. Her Aunt Hope was sent for, and day and night she comforted the remorse stricken girl, and listened to her ceaseless self-upbraidings.

"You told me what to do, Aunt Hope, but I loved his admiration, and I knew it was this all the time, although I wouldn't admit it to myself, which made me keep him at my side; and now I must carry through life the thought that I am his murderer!"

Mrs. Stanley did all that it was in her power to do. She went to Mrs. Norwood and painted her niece's agony in such words, that the mourning mother's heart was melted, and she went to Julia and told her she forgave her for the wrong she had done her son.

And at last Mrs. Stanley's counsels took root in the heart of her niece, and repentance took the place of remorse, and she rose up from her sick bed a wiser and a better woman.

She acquainted her lover with all the circumstances of her intimacy with John Norwood, but he tried to soften her self-upbraidings, and his love never permitted him to see that she did not falsely accuse herself. They were married, and Julia Paulding was very happy with the husband of her youth; but there was one memory which threw a shadow over many of the hours of her life.

She was an earnest, Christian woman, a loving wife, a devoted mother; for in that long, bitter season of remorse, she had learned that the only healing for the sinning and the suffering is in the Voice of the Master, flowing sweetly and tenderly down through its long path of centuries, "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace."

## Sunset Reverie.

BY NETTIE VERNON.

"Live well—and then, when thou art called to die, thou art of age to claim eternity."

How much real beauty and worth lies hidden in this sentiment. Pious lips uttered it—lowly hearts received and cherished it as a precept of undoubted truth. It dispelled darkness from many a mind, cheered many a weary and fainting one, and gave new hope and courage to the disheartened and sad.

"Live well"—*not* in cherishing every dream of ambition, and being forgetful of life's daily duties—*not* in worshipping gold, and being unmindful of Him "who formed the heavens and the earth"—*not* in hoarding unconsecrated wealth, but in constant communion with the great All-Father—in a sweet confidence and trust in His protecting care—in the performance of every duty which he hath laid upon us—in an earnest desire and effort to benefit those with whom we mingle in life's busy throng; in *this* way we may indeed "*live well*;" and when the little tenement which is called "the spirit's earthly boundary" may mingle with its kindred dust, our name may long remain stainless, a rich legacy to those who, like ourselves, may practise the art of living well.

And then, how sweet the promise, how rich the reward! "Live well, and then how soon soe'er thou'rt called to die, thou art of age to claim eternity." Thousands have lived until age has laid a frosty mantle around their brows, and pointed with trembling finger down to the narrow tomb.

Life has been to them a long, long scene of light and shade; while Time, on busy mission, has borne his faithful record of their ill-spent hours up to the heavenly court. No loving angel, with benignant smile, has bent above *their* pillow at death, with the sweet whisper, "thou art of age to claim eternity."

But, from shorter lives, from those whose day had been scarcely woven into a chain of years, *brighter* histories may be written. *They have lived well*. Virtue has sealed *her* signet on their brows; faith has firmly clasped their souls, twining tendrils around the throne of Deity; love has gilded their morning sky; hope has beautified each opening hour; and when life's realities seemed merging into death's uncertainty, may we not well suppose that seraph spirits from the unseen shore sweetly echoed the gladsome message, "Thou may'st claim eternity!"

## The Ballet Girl.

[That very capricious and exacting creature, the amusement-loving public, is not apt to look below the surface, to see at what cost he is sometimes amused. The wonderful feats that are performed in his presence, are taken as they seem, as if the "artists" were to the manner born. The author of "Women in New York," has lifted the veil, and let us have a glimpse of the way in which the ballet girl is prepared for her airy performances, which, it must be said, are never pleasing to a pure mind; and to witness which, we think no young man who really loves and respects them, will take his sister, or his sweetheart.]

An airy vision seems to rise before your eyes, and you see a beautiful creature, all grace and brightness, floating in the radiance of the golden gas-light, to the sound of joyous music. She is rosy-cheeked with happiness, and radiant with smiles, and you cannot divest yourself of the idea that she dances because she loves it. Even when you know that she does it to earn her bread and butter, you still fancy that she must feel light-hearted and happy. The painted scene through which she glides,

looks like a garden of living flowers; but alas! her smiles and the blossoms are not real. They live but for the eye of the spectator. Behind the scenes they turn to rouged cheeks and tinsel canvas.

The ballet girl at home, is a very different being from the fairy queen who flourishes her gilded sceptre upon the stage. When you see a ballet girl executing her capricious phantasies with so much ease, call to mind what it has cost her to arrive at so much perfection—a cost not only of labor, but of real suffering.

At six, she is placed under the care of some good dancing master, who never pauses before the means of achieving an effectual result. Every morning, when the class is opened, the poor child's feet are placed, the heels together, and the toes pointing outwards, in a straight line, in slits in the floor, made expressly for the purpose. She cries at first, her face is distorted by misery; but it is in vain; she must submit.

After a month's training, she can turn her feet without the machine of torture. Then begins the posturing exercise, which consists of efforts, seemingly impossible at first, to bend the loins across a bar; and then, unaided, regain an upright position. Fresh cries, tears, and sufferings. Pshaw! it is nothing to the initiated. She is solaced by the assurance that all the world will drag her in a triumphal car some day.

At last, the loins have become supple; she can spring, pirouette, or bound twenty times a minute, without being out of breath; or run on her toes, or do a dozen equally wonderful things, and smile all the while.

Ten years she has spent at this violent teaching, and now, at sixteen, she enters a corps de ballet, as one of the minor members. She walks behind the others, on the third row, receiving three dollars a week, and finds most of her own costumes. Her mother (they all have mothers) is ever beside her, watching and hoping. One day, the third best danseuse is ill; the unknown girl is called upon to fill her place for the night. She fulfils her task to the satisfaction of the director; she has been noticed. Another time, the second danseuse is absent; she replaces her with complete success; and, as a crowning triumph, a something or other calls upon her one night to take the first part in the ballet, and audaciously and admirably she does it. Her mother takes three pinches of snuff extra, (all the mothers of the ballet girls take snuff) in proof that her dreams are realized.

She thereupon quits her garret, where she and her daughter had existed, and takes an apartment on the second floor. As her child rises in the world, she descends the stairs.

Nevertheless, the ex-figurant, who has become a celebrity of the first-class, continues her practicings, as before, at home, to preserve her suppleness and activity. She worked to obtain them: she must now work not to lose them. Every gesture is studied before a glass. She bends backwards, bounds, stoops, springs upwards, and flits like a bird, from branch to branch, and when she requires a little repose from her labors, amuses herself by twisting round a triangle.

She flies from one city to another; and if she succeeds, as only one in a thousand does, she will realize a fortune either by her profession, or by catching a very rich, and of course, very silly husband.

## The Blessing of the New Year.

BY NINA II.

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Squire Thornton sat in his easy chair before a glowing fire one night in December, the last in fact of that month, and of another year.

Cold and crystal clear, the atmosphere without gave back in sharp, keen echoes every tone striking it; the silvery chime of joyous bells, the hurried tread of pedestrians hastening homeward; and more distant, the confused murmur of the city's jarring life, swelling and sinking, but never long subdued. Within this quiet, old-fashioned parlor, the wood-fire roared and crackled, cutting with sword-like flames the huge fantastic shadows, which wandered over floor and ceiling, like the restless ghosts of a whole generation dead. Something substantial and friendly gave to the antique furniture a peculiar grace; and from the walls family portraits looked down, stern or smiling as the case might be, a weird, silent company, whose lips neither love or sympathy ever won from their mocking repose.

Harold Thornton sat alone, and though little given to dreaming, the spell of the dying year was on him, and he listened to its voice. A lonely, isolated being, to his gaze the past opened no brightening vista of years which affection had crowned and sanctified; round him centered no sweet home ties. In his father's house, and his own boyhood's shelter, Squire Thornton existed with no more companionable shapes about his way than the phantom memories of youth, and now he was no longer young.

Many times of late, this man had questioned soberly, the wisdom of his life's aims and fulfillment. The world crowned his career as a success; in the depths of his heart Harold Thornton knew it to be a failure. Age was creeping over him, stirring in his breast the yearning for something deeper than he had known—Love, which should greet him with smiles at his own threshold, and follow him with tears to the shadows of another leading outward and Beyond.

To-night, as he reviewed page after page of that unwritten history which every soul contains, his mother's face seemed bent on him with sad, reproachful tenderness, as if rebuking some sin still unrepented of. Full well Harold Thornton knew the shape of that early wrong, which had pained him sorely, and now returned again.

In the wide world there was but one person with whom he claimed any kindred, and with that one he had exchanged no token for sixteen years. Each returning season brought with it some softening of regret, but an iron will and pride had reared the barrier, and still it rose sternly between Harold Thornton and his only sister. Family quarrels often originate in "trifles light as air;" the root of bitterness alluded to was planted in this wise—

A college classmate and rival, for whom Thornton had conceived a violent prejudice, saw and loved his sister Marian, then a young and beautiful girl. Ordinarily the matter would not have come under his special jurisdiction, but since their early orphanhood, Harold had felt himself to be the natural advisor of his sister's movements, although another guardian had been appointed her by law. Violently, and therefore unwisely, he opposed the connection, still unable to urge anything beyond a personal pique against the successful wooer. This utterly failed; and Marian Thornton became eventually the wife of Richard Wyld. But in the heat of his indignation, the brother declared he would have no more dealings with so wilful a sister, and up to this hour had kept his evil vow.

It was a sad weight upon the warm heart of the woman, when, for the first time separated, there sprang up between herself and brother no letters or tokens to speak of a chasm filled by hourly remembrances. Year by year, as new ties entwined her life, and the circle of home widened, she sighed and wept over the animosity which no effort on her part had power to quench; gradually these attempts ceased, and silence far worse than of death

reigned between them. For him, a man's life, of eager activity was in store, and into this gulf he had plunged, whirling with the tide. But when the busy day was ended, and the hour for repose and memory returned, there came with it reflections which forbade rest, which the smiles and prosperity of the world could not destroy. Yet long after time had dissipated the boyish prejudice against his brother-in-law, an affectionate yearning went out towards the sister he had ignored, and the children he had never seen; pride still dominant checked the kindlier impulse, and nerved his heart to stouter resistance.

Upon the night alluded to, the solitary occupant of the spacious and lonely old drawing-room; more lonely by far for the silver voiced memories which sang by its hearth; had striven vainly to shake off the dull weight of thought to which the hour naturally gave rise. The New Year can scarcely commence its mission, in the most thoughtless human soul, with no warning to renewed vigor of purpose; more pungent regret for error committed; and the angel whose tears are said to efface the dark stain of sin repented, stood unseen by Squire Thornton's chair, waiting to perform its heavenly mission.

"Heigh-ho!" with a sudden start he rose from his seat, and began pacing to and fro with steady, monotonous tread; glancing up now and then from the darkened floor to the windows, which, with shades still undrawn, framed the white, frosty splendor of the winter's night. The clock upon the mantel ticked dreamily as the moments rounded and fell, and still the fire light wavered and the shadows grew denser. Suddenly the room became flooded with the rich, soft harmony of a familiar air, every note of which, thrilled with its perfect melody like the most exquisite human voice. Such, however, it was not, but the tiny Swiss clock, which was a music box as well. Mournfully, sweetly it sang on, and on, passing from one air to another with the slow gliding motion of its invisible fingers. Up from the Past it seemed to bring the music of early departing days. So many friends and hopes, so much of life itself gone! how soon might his own place become vacant; yet where would the void be felt?

It was long since the language of prayer had passed his lips; now it seemed the only channel into which feeling could flow. The few and simple petitions within whose circle all vast and eternal meanings congregate—learned at his mother's knee, he now repeated,

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us!" Like a sudden ray of light, there darted in upon his soul a perception of the self-condemnation which the words implied. Again and again, with still deepening power, the sentence echoed through his mind, and the veil of self-deceit fell from his clearer vision. The departing year rolled its dark current to his feet, and upon that tide was flung the burden of a proud and long sinning nature. There was no sound of departing wings, as the recording angel hastened with his sweet story heavenward; but in that hour of struggling emotion the man was not alone, though his witnesses came and went upon steps of air.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Come away Grace, and let William close the shutters!"

"Not just yet mother, please?"

"But it is so chilly! how can you be comfortable in the window?"

As she spoke, the lady drew nearer the cheery, glowing grate; and then with a glance over the bright and tasteful drawing-room, settled herself more snugly in her easy chair. It was the evening of New Year's day, and busied with friendly callers, and the interchange of greetings and good wishes, there had really been no half hour which could be given to more serious, perhaps sadder reflections. "Between the dark and the day light" the time had come, and with eager and rapid survey she reviewed the life she had lived and finished.

So rich and full of blessing, the shadows were almost too few as the grateful heart acknowledged. Home and family ties, wealth which gave power to bless, and influence ever increasing. Save the one trial which every such anniversary quickened into stinging remembrance, there seemed more of sunshine in Marian Wyld's existence than is often allotted to mortals.

In the deep bay window the young girl still lingered, watching with curious eyes of interest the moving figures of the broad, bright square. Passing and repassing out of darkness into light, and from light to shade again, one loiterer, who paused upon the opposite side walk, caught the picture of a bright young face framed in the gold of its dancing curls, standing in a rich and well-lighted room. At the same instant Grace Wyld exclaimed,

"Mamma! do come here, and see this man looking in so earnestly; what is it for?"

"Probably because you are so conspicuous,

my dear; unless you wish to hold a street-lovee you had best leave the window." Laughingly the girl obeyed, and drew the shutters closely, turning to the open piano, the gift of that day, and with practised touch woke the music that slept in its wiry keys.

The quick stroke of the door bell was unheard, and the servant who attended it ushered a gentleman into the library, lit the gas, and drew a chair; but Harold Thornton would not sit. Leaning upon the nearest support, he awaited his sister's approach, till the soft rustle of woman's garments announced her coming.

With habitual grace, tempered by the natural reserve which one displays towards a stranger, she advanced towards him; but the words died upon her lips, as in the old light of the eyes raised to hers there flashed back a flood of early memories, young and warm, though the faces and forms of both bore evidence to the flight of time.

"Harold!"

"I have come back, Marian, come home again to you; will you forgive and receive me?"

It seemed too like a dream, when Richard Wyld entered his library that evening, and beheld his wife with face glad yet tearful, still holding the hand of a gray-haired man, whom, in broken speech, she presented as the long absent brother; but the hearty welcome, reiterated again and again, left no room to doubt his gladness.

"Isn't it strange, Gracie," said little Dick Wyld, as he crept to his sister's side, "that our uncle should come back to day? What nice things New Year brings!"

From her nook in the recess Grace looked out upon the three who sat together before the fire, conversing as if there had lain between them no dark valley of estrangement. In the chastened and subdued expression of the stranger's face shone the revealing of a wordless experience, even to the child thought not utterly dim; and more to herself than in reply to the query, she whispered, "Ah, this is the blessing of the New Year!"

## THE COMING YEAR.

We look hopefully into the coming year, yet not without a sense of shrinking in view of the fiery ordeal through which our nation has yet to pass. To us, it has never seemed that our people have realized in any adequate degree the imminence of their peril, nor the strength of the power with which they were contending. As we write, the nation is giving new evidence of its great resources, and in striking a blow on the very soil where treason was born and nourished into monstrous life, has done much to dishearten and cripple its enemies. It has commenced a steadily aggressive movement, after prudent delay in gathering together its large resources and from this time forth, we may look for one advance after another, and for a certain outcrushing of the rebellion. But, we must not be too confident in our strength, nor calculate too much on the weakness of our foe. He is strong—very strong, even under all disadvantages—and will fight with a desperate fierceness and inhumanity, that must often hurt us with sad losses.

In contrasting the condition of our nation to-day, with what it was one year ago, even though now in the midst of a fearful war, how much there is for encouragement and hope. Then, we seemed drifting, almost helplessly, to ruin. The government, with all of its resources, was in the hands of those who had long plotted its destruction. Our little army was scattered, and remote; our ships of war far off on distant stations; our arms distributed to those who meant to use them in our overthrow; our national treasury plundered and bare—and, worse than all—public sentiment in the loyal states divided, and, in many instances, hesitating or demoralized. Thousands of sympathizers with treason, in the north and west, were acting in wicked concert with their confederates at the south. True men, who looked below the surface, and comprehended the exact state of things, shuddered at the peril in which we stood. But, how is it to-day? The whole north and west stand united, and with all their vast resources pledged to maintain the Union. An army of five hundred thousand men is in the field—a large navy hovers along the coast from Virginia to Texas. Money is poured into the national treasury like water, and the people pledge the government to millions of men, if needed, and thousands of millions of dollars. The national heart is aroused, and beats in stronger pulses than ever before. With one voice it is declared, that rebellion must be put down, and our flag float as before, from the lakes to the Gulf of Mexico.

As a nation, we are stronger four-fold than when we first grappled with the monster, and we shall, as we wrestle, grow stronger and stronger until victorious on every field. And so, in the coming year, if we have sorrow and pain, we shall have triumph also. Long before its close, may the word "Peace" be flashed over the wires from the centre to the circumference of the land; but not a peace tainted with even the smallest concession to wrong.



# The Guardian Angel.

BY J. L. M'CHEERY.

CHAPTER I.

"Does Nellie love mamma?"

"Yes, mamma."

And the child's arms went twining about the mother's neck.

"Will you love mamma when she gets to be old?"

"Yes, mamma."

And the golden curls rested upon the mother's bosom. Mother and child remained in mutual caress—the one soon lost in sleep, the other lost in thought.

We are no romance writer, and if we were, there is no romance to be woven into our simple story. Carrie Morgan, the thoughtful mother of the sleeping child, would afford the most imaginative novelist but few materials from which to form a heroine. She had no "stately form," nor "queenly bearing;" she had no very "lofty brow" to indicate a "commanding intellect;" her lips were not very "ruby," and her teeth were no more (though perhaps no less) like "pearls" than those of ordinary women. She was simply an earnest, but quiet, undemonstrative little woman, who had now for nearly five years been the faithful and affectionate wife of Henry Morgan.

Sitting there, with her child in her arms, her thoughts wandered back to her own childhood days. Yet memory found little there upon which it was pleasant to dwell. Her father was a hard, worldly man; a strong, hale, robust man, whose boast it was that he never had known a day's sickness in his life. Her mother, on the contrary, was constitutionally weak and ailing, but withal, mentally, morally, and *spiritually*, a woman of whom any man might well be proud. Her father possessed a competence, but desired a fortune; and he appeared to think it very unreasonable

in his wife to persist in being so feeble and sickly—which was the principal obstacle in his way to wealth. At last, as the indistinct vision of a new-made grave began sometimes to glimmer upon him, a servant-girl was procured to bear a part of the household burden; but it was too late. It might not have been too late, had he been able to furnish also what to her was still more necessary—gentleness, forbearance, sympathy, instead of coldness, reserve, and ill-suppressed dissatisfaction. So she died.

About a year afterwards, Carrie's father married again—a lynx-eyed, hawk-nosed, wafer-lipped, peaked-chinned old maid, whom he had often pointed out to his former help-meet as a model housekeeper. Before another year rolled round—not to dwell upon unimportant matters—he died.

The bereaved widow exhibited Christian resignation, under a visitation of Providence which made her at once mistress of more wealth than she had been able to rake and scrape together during a life of industry and economy—which in her case had degenerated into *stinginess*.

Of the children, the three eldest were boys. They had inherited from their father various degrees of hard-heartedness, and had already gone forth into the world, abundantly able to make their way through it. The next in years, a girl named Isabel, possessed all her father's ambition and love of power, with much of her mother's intellect, imagination and feeling, but little of her integrity and regard for principle. She ran through her patrimony in splendid style, just in time to form a matrimonial alliance with a scion of one of the "first families," whom she married for his wealth, and who married her for the same reason. Mutually deceived and equally obstinate, a divorce was soon procured. Re-assuming her maiden name, Isabel Austin

emerged from matrimony, a vociferous expounder of the wrongs of women, a prominent and able apostle-ess of socialism; and those who were prejudiced against her represented her as advocating other isms, still less reputable.

Carrie Austin, the youngest of the family, remembered but little of her mother, and could recollect little of her father that she cared to remember. In form, features and disposition, she was entirely her mother's child, and inherited, also, her physical weakness and feeble health. Year by year, it was a wonder to all that she lived; but at length it became evident that the rough treatment and coarse fare which fell to her lot while living with her skeleton step-mother, strengthened, instead of destroying, her physical powers. Yet she was far from being healthy, and perhaps never knew what it was to pass a day without positive pain.

Worse for her own happiness than even this, she grew up with false notions and prejudices. She very naturally judged the world at large, from what it had been her lot to see of it. Virtue, purity and affection, were too much a part of herself to be easily eradicated from her heart; yet there was nothing to call them into action. Gentle smiles and loving words were things she never saw or heard; but from her own daily life they seemed as far away as heaven. So she grew up, morbid and intense in feeling, while evermore from within went up the wail of a starving soul.

Her father's death was sudden and unexpected, so no will had been made. The grasping step-mother and the elder children had taken the "lion's share" of the property, and what little had originally been left for Carrie, was gradually falling into their clutches. She had reached her teens, when she began to perceive her deficiencies in scholarship, and determined to claim her own portion of the property, (what was left of it,) and expend it in obtaining an education. A thirst for knowledge, quick of apprehension, and unceasing in her application, she soon outstripped her companions; though the studies of her choice were of a nature more solid than showy. Then she went forth into the wide, wide world, to work her way through it as best she might.

The romance of her life came at last. Henry Morgan, a handsome, talented, ambitious young man, fresh from college, just admitted to the bar, with "a good start in the world," and the future bright before him, was attracted by the straight-forward simplicity and strong common

sense of the lonely orphan. After a very short acquaintance, his own generous heart, and a sentiment of romance with which he was tinctured, prompted him to break through the worldly maxims which might have been expected to bear upon one of his profession, and he offered her his hand. Surprised and embarrassed by her impetuous lover's passionate protestations, she yet took counsel of prudence, and asked time for consideration. It was unwillingly granted; meantime she studied him well. She became convinced that he was a young man of honor and principle, kind in disposition, and generous to a fault; pure in heart, and every way worthy the love of any woman. The result was favorable to the young lawyer, and upon the matter being taken into Court, judgment was given in favor of the plaintiff. Sweet was "Love's young dream"—doubly sweet to the maiden, whose cup of life had hitherto been filled to the brim with wormwood. And with joyousness of heart came renewed physical health and strength. The earth was all brightness, and life all beautiful, while the lovers dwelt upon enchanted isles. What was the world to them?

So they were married.

## CHAPTER II.

Any of our readers who have traversed the Father of Waters, must have been exceedingly struck with the difference in the stages of vegetation along the route. Starting from New Orleans on a warm summery morning, with all nature in beauty and bloom, on arriving, in a few days, at Dubuque or St. Paul, the climate and the vegetation indicate that there, winter's chill reign has not ceased. Still, upon comparing any two adjacent landing-places, it would be impossible for the most critical observer to determine, from appearances, which was in the coldest latitude. So gradual is the change.

We deem it superfluous to explain our parable, when we compare matrimony to a voyage up the Mississippi river.

If we have been fortunate enough to retain the attention of any of our fair married lady readers to this point in our story, we need not endeavor to describe to them how gradually and imperceptibly the warmth of the young husband's ardent affection too often decreases; how, by degrees, the gentle, appreciative words, the little acts of kindness are omitted: till at length the husband, with whom familiarity has bred contempt, or something nearly akin thereto, addresses and treats *his wife* with

less consideration and respect than he does his neighbors or chance acquaintances. On comparing this week with last, no difference can be perceived; but comparing either week with the wedding week, and how vast the difference! To those who have witnessed or experienced all this, it need not be described; to those who have not, it cannot be.

We will not, then, attempt to narrate how happily the hours sped by, for a season, with Harry Morgan and his happy bride; how by and by, when business pressed, an evening or two of the week was spent at "the office," how sometimes he strayed "down town" of an evening to discuss politics, or whatever other topic might prove interesting; till by and by, nearly all his waking hours were spent either at "the office," or "down town." By the time they had been married three years, hardly an evening in the week was spent by Harry Morgan at home in company with his wife. So the romance fast faded out of her life, left day after day, and evening after evening, alone in her silent room.

We should have mentioned, some time since, that the career of Isabel Austin had culminated in her writing a book, in which all the wrongs of woman, and all the evils of society, and all the woes of humanity, were pictured in glowing colors. What remedy she proposed for all these ills, it was not easy to determine; nor whether it did, or did not, include a complete abolition of the matrimonial tie. Being herself a "strong-minded" woman, she had quite a coterie of followers among the weak-minded of both sexes. Hearing that her sister Carrie had "married well," she forwarded a copy of her book, followed by herself as a commentary. I think it afterwards leaked out, in some way, that she had declared it a part of her mission to convert Harry Morgan. Her sister she apparently did not consider worth converting. Perhaps, in her heart, she had no more faith in woman's equality with man, than some others, who did not say so much about it.

Her first inquiry was whether Harry, (for so she persisted in calling Mr. Morgan from the beginning,) had read "her book." Finding he had not, she extorted from him the promise that he would read it; a promise which it is doubtful whether he kept—at least, she appeared to doubt it, for she read the whole of it, to him afterwards, in successive instalments, as "specimens of her style." Then came arguments upon her doctrine; and where Harry was not overpowered by her reasoning, he assuredly was by her volubility. He laughingly declared

that he was not afraid of any living lawyer, at the bar; but acknowledged that he felt obliged to retire before the discharge of her verbal artillery,—which admission she immediately used as an argument *ad hominem*, to prove woman's superiority or fitness for the legal profession.

But Belle Austin was a dashing, showy woman—in short, the world called her a splendid woman; and so far as external appearances were concerned, the world was not very far wrong. And by and by, Mr. Morgan caught himself—or might have caught himself, had he been on the watch over himself—comparing the two sisters, and wishing his wife had a little more of the vivacity and animation of Isabel. If to Carrie's good qualities of head and heart, were added Isabel's superior powers of mind and tongue, he fancied she would be better fitted to adorn the station he was destined by and by to occupy—for Mr. Morgan was ambitious. At length—probably Harry himself could best tell when or how—he discovered that Isabel's voice could be dropped to the minor key. Indeed, she said she had gentle tones for those she loved. Harry found she had gentle tones for him.

Remember, this did not strike Harry Morgan in the broad, farcical, half-ridiculous light in which it now appears to us, who narrate or listen to the story. He was one of the *dramatis personæ* of the scene, and was in the hands of a woman far his superior in the ways of the world, and in her knowledge of the surface-currents of human passion. She loved, moreover, to exercise her power over others, and to dazzle by reflected light from such men of talent or influence as she could win, for a time, to follow in her train.

She had at first announced her intention to make but a few days' visit; but days became weeks, and weeks lengthened into months. Yet she yielded—whether willingly or unwillingly was not easy to determine—to Mr. Morgan's entreaties to consider his house her home. He had become habituated to taking her to the theatre, the concert, and various places of amusement; and he lived in a perpetual feverish excitement which he did not take the pains to analyze. His wife could have gone with him, of course, at any time, had she only mentioned it; but her quiet, earnest, spiritual nature craved no such stimulus. So she gradually came to occupy the position of her husband's housekeeper, whose office it was to see that his meals were properly prepared, and his household labor performed,

so that his comfort should suffer no detriment. He was not cruel nor unkind, though sometimes he was irritable and petulant. He possessed a feeling heart, that would not allow even a dumb brute to suffer needlessly; yet Carrie Morgan was not so blind as to fail to see that her wishes were often disregarded, and her wants unsupplied, in a manner very different from what they would have been, had she been Isabel Austin.

Mrs. Morgan made no complaint. She longed for sympathy; but if her husband had none for her, there was no one else in the wide world from whom she would claim it. So all day long she was left with her aching heart for her only company. And her headache brought on the headache, and more and more, as day by day passed, she grew weary, and weak, and sad; and sick,—for hers was one of those sensitive organizations in which the condition of the mind is sympathetically reflected upon the physical system. A physician was called, and orders given that no effort nor expense should be spared in order to procure her recovery.

What more could a kind husband do?

### CHAPTER III.

So, day by day, the young wife slowly took down, stone by stone, and story by story, the beautiful castles in the air she had been building so long. Star by star went out in midnight darkness, till not a ray was left of all that so short awhile ago lit up the heaven of her delight. Leaf by leaf faded away the flowers of hope which she had woven into elfin bowers on the sunny-side of life, till all the future became a desert, with not a cooling spring in all the dreary waste from which her fainting heart might quench its thirst for human love.

Wearily, sadly—despairing of all but God—she bade farewell to earthly hopes and joys; and day by day, evening by evening, sat in her silent room alone with her headache.

(A very foolish woman, to make so much ado because her husband has ceased to fondle and fawn, and devote himself to her as exclusively as in their honey-moon!

Possibly, *sir*—for no woman could utter such a sentiment; but if you are a man, you married, or will marry, your wife for being just so foolish! If not, you are unworthy the love of any woman—wise or other-wise.)

Yet not all alone sat Carrie Morgan. There was little Nellie, a golden-haired child about three years old—a link at once between her mother and earth, and between her father and

heaven. So gentle, affectionate and spiritual, it would be impossible, as well as useless, to try to decide which loved her most. For her sake her father would have died, and her mother would have lived. To love, and watch, and guard her child, the young mother was willing even to “live to be old”—even with her noble, talented husband’s affections stolen from her by her heartless and unprincipled rival.

The child, with a depth of feeling beyond her years, returned her mother’s affection; and promising, in infantile phrase, to love her always, sank to sleep in her mother’s arms. Thus we introduced them to the reader.

The mother sat lost in thought; but was soon aroused by the entrance of her husband, accompanied by Belle Austin, whom he had found, or who had found him, somewhere “down town.” Isabel, to whom the company of Mrs. Morgan appeared to possess few attractions, sailed immediately into the parlor, while Mr. Morgan, finding his wife in the dining-room, exclaimed,

“Hello, Carrie—now have Biddy get supper on the table, as soon as possible. The ‘Dixies’ are going to sing at the Hall to-night, and Belle and I must attend—wont you go along?”

Indisposed both mentally and physically, Mrs. Morgan replied in the negative.

“Well, suit yourself and you’ll suit me; but hurry up that supper, for if we are not on hand early the seats will all be occupied.”

The household Bridget, having taken that afternoon for her visit home, Mrs. Morgan laid her sleeping child upon the lounge in the parlor, where Belle Austin was sitting in state, and returned to the dining-room to prepare the evening meal. The fierce denunciatrix of Woman’s Wrongs could see no wrong in her invalid sister getting supper for her, while she herself sat in idleness. It was only another illustration of the “great spiritual truth,” that “meaner spirits gravitate towards menial avocations.” You could have found that in “her book.”

Mr. Morgan entered the parlor. The syren greeted him with one of her sweetest smiles, which brought him instantly to her side. A lovelier woman than Belle Austin, seated there in queenly grace, her beaming countenance upturned to his, Harry Morgan acknowledged he never had beheld. Compelled by an irresistible impulse, he pressed a kiss upon her not very unwilling lips. It was the first kiss—long coveted, but never taken till now. He

inwardly promised that if she uttered a word of complaint about it, he would give it back. But she didn't.

Just then the touch of an angel's wing awoke the slumbering child. Nellie looked up in quiet wonder, surprised at the unusual demonstrations of mutual affection she had beheld. The voice of Mrs. Morgan was heard, announcing that supper was ready; upon which Belle Austin went forward to the dining-room, while Mr. Morgan, observing that his daughter was awake, delayed long enough to lift her from her couch and take her with him.

With one little arm around his neck, and the other stroking his beard, Nellie inquired, with childish simplicity—

"Do you love Aunt Belle, papa?"

"I shouldn't wonder, child," he said; (but he did wonder.)

"Do you love mamma?"

"Yes, darling."

"Why don't you kiss *her*, then, sometimes?"

The man could say nothing, but stood trying to remember how long since he had. The child continued her torturing cross-examination.

"Does Aunt Belle love you, papa?"

"I guess so, child."

Nellie seemed to be reflecting a moment, and then inquired—

"Papa, *will she love you when you get to be old?*"

What a world of thought went flashing through the father's mind at those few, simple words! He made no reply, but seated himself at the table, with Nellie in her little chair beside him, and ate in silence. Isabel attempted to rally him on his absent-mindedness; but her raillery met with no response. Conscience was at work; and he seemed "like one who had seen a vision." A vision indeed it was that had flashed upon him;—showing him the shallowness, the frivolity, the total lack of principle in the tempter, whose syren voice had led him on till he had so nearly parted with his integrity and self-respect. He acknowledged to himself, and on the moment trampled under foot, his unworthy and unmanly passion for this beautiful but false-hearted woman, whose attachment for him would not survive the first blast of misfortune. He pictured himself to himself as an aged, gray-haired man, waiting for his final summons to the eternal world. He knew that *then*, not *her* love, but that of the neglected, uncomplaining, devoted *wife*, if his unkindness did not too early sap the springs of life, would

smooth his passage to the grave, and make the twilight of life radiant with the promise of immortality.

Henry Morgan was not in the humor for attending any place of amusement that evening. He furnished another escort for Isabel, and returned to his own deserted fireside. The deep waves of affection again surged over his being, as he took his guardian angel, his little Nellie in his arms, and kneeling beside the lounge on which his gentle wife, pale, sad, and tearful, was lying, acknowledged his error, asked forgiveness, and again laid all the wealth of a still manly, noble, and generous heart at her feet. It is needless attempting to depict the result.

As if at the enchantment of one magic touch, were upbuilt again beautiful castles in the air, more gorgeous than those which, for three years past, she had been slowly pulling down, day by day, and hour by hour, stone by stone, and story by story. The darkling night which had drawn its thick curtains around her soul, was lifted like the morning mist—for the voice of Love had said, "Let there be light!" Bloomed anew the faded flowers of hope, and the desert of life blossomed as the rose.

As for Belle Austin, her visit was soon concluded. The next that was heard of her, she was officiating as President-ess of a "Reform" Convention, on which occasion she announced her intention of writing another book on "Woman's Wrongs." Whether she intends therein to speak of the flagrant and unpardonable wrong she so recklessly and remorselessly insisted upon her sister, we are not informed.

DELHI, IOWA.

# The Lady over the Way.

BY MRS A. C. S. ALLARD.

It is a warm June morning, and nature, like a languid beauty, seems impassioned, and waiting for a sensation. Flowers send up their incense as adoration to Him who placed them here, as texts of his thoughts.

Mrs. Stanley is preparing Harry, a little boy of eight, and Katie, a girl of six, for school.

Harry has lost his reader, and must have it he urges, or lose his place in the class; and Katie, upon whom was just placed the glossy white apron, returns from the garden, where she has been to gather a bouquet for her teacher, with garments which testify that she has fallen upon the moist earth. A severe rebuke from her mother brought dark shadows upon the face which had been bright with the tracings of pleasant thoughts, as she arranged white, velvet, and crimson buds among the green basis of her bouquet. At length Harry's reader is found under the lounge, and Katie's soiled garment replaced by a fresh one, and the children are hurried off with ruffled tempers. Instead of leaving upon the mother's lips one of those blossoms of love which bloom spontaneously upon those of childhood, they walk on, revolving in their minds the injustice of their mother.

It is true, they do not know it by that term; children do not analyze and classify traits and qualities; but a very small child intuitively understands whether its parent is at all times just with it, or indulges, or censures, according to the caprices of his own humor.

Mrs. Stanley was of the type of a class, of which there are too many. It has been remarked, that "to govern well, we must first govern ourselves;" our own temper must first become obedient to the rein of discipline, ere we can successfully attempt the guidance of another; and it is the lack of self-culture which has made the home-evangels of our

homes so few, and has thrown out upon the world so many dark, restless spirits.

Mrs. Stanley was the only daughter of parents in easy circumstances, who idolized her, and were too fond and short-sighted, to behold along the dim aisles of the future the hours of harsh reality; and they therefore neglected to clothe her in the armor of self-denial and patience, which the spirit in its life-battle must wear, or suffer, as well as inflict, many wounds.

Their darling Flora must be denied nothing, and as a matter of course, she grew to womanhood wilful and selfish. No expense within the range of her father's means was spared to render her attractive, and at sixteen she became the bride of a young man of moderate means, but handsome person and engaging address. He was enterprising and persevering; and with a little economy upon Flora's part, would soon have sailed smoothly upon the current of prosperity. About the time of her marriage, her father was left in meagre circumstances, by being compelled to pay a heavy security; and instead of reclining upon the easy cushions of the vehicle of "papa's property," Flora and Mr. Stanley were compelled to walk over the rough road of life. And when Mr. Stanley only needed the encouragement of an earnest, sympathizing, loving wife, to render light the hand of care which was beginning to press heavily upon him, and to strike the keys of his soul, to the march of high purpose and strong resolve, a complaining, dissatisfied child-woman, continually jarred the sweeter notes of his spirit by harsh discord; until the brightness faded from his face, the music from his laugh, and all hope abandoned of happiness, was as plainly written upon his brow, as was the inscription over Dante's regions of despair.

And thus nine years had passed; he had struggled against discouragement, extravagance, and upbraiding; and although he had not sunk, he had been able to stem the current feebly up to this time, this June morning, upon which our tale commences. He had by good management succeeded in paying for a neat cottage, the benefit of which was felt, when the period at which he had been accustomed to pay rent arrived. The great grief of his life was the disregard which his wife seemed to entertain of their mutual interest. Every caprice of fancy must be gratified, or a "scene" was the result; vainly he sought to impress upon her mind that their interests were inseparable; but reason counted her not among her subjects, and usually, after a war-

fare of words, the disheartened husband yielded to his blind wife, as the only "conditions of peace."

But we will return to the morning upon which we have seen Mrs. Stanley in her matronly capacity. She had taken her place by the cradle to quiet the fretful babe, looking weary and unhappy, when a rap was heard at the parlor door.

"Good morning, Aunt Esther? I am so glad you have come. I need a consolers this morning."

"Are you not well, Flora?"

"Quite well, thank you; but wearied out. Mr. Stanley thinks the expense of a domestic and nurse, greater than he can sustain, and so I am left with a thousand cares and the responsibility of looking after the children; oh, dear! one might as well be dead as marry a poor man;" and the tears began to glitter upon the fringes of her eyes.

Aunt Esther did not respond, and at this moment a burst of music, rich and inspiring, came thrilling upon the air from the windows of the large stone mansion across the street. They both remained silent until the notes died away upon the perfumed air. Tears had disappeared from Mrs. Stanley's eyes, under the influence of the sweet sounds, as dew disappears from the violet when the sun floods the earth with its brightness. A gentler look had softened her features, but it faded, as the face of a woman of perhaps twenty-six, appeared at the large window opposite. A casual observer would not have pronounced her a beauty; but the face was pleasing, and a student of human nature would have recognized it as the index of deep-toned, positive character. The form was slight, but finely rounded, and the clear white and pink of the face was that which is painted by the New England breezes. Her black-brown hair formed a fine relief upon the white brow, where it so gracefully reposed; her eyes were the glory of her face; a soft brown, large, melting, and expressive, they seemed placed there as the stars upon the face of night, to illuminate and beautify. The lips were full and rich, but there was an expression about the mouth which indicated firmness of purpose.

Her morning dress was a pink silk, confined by a cord, with tassels of the same color, and, indeed, she seemed just in keeping with the stately stone front, whose interior, wealth and taste had spared no pains to beautify. This morning, she had resorted to her piano, rather as a medium of the sweet thoughts that were

hymning through her mind, than as a beguiler of time; and now, when she had closed the instrument, she took up her embroidery, and seated herself by the window, through which the geranium perfumed breezes were lightly passing.

At the sight of her calm, pleasant face, all the gentler emotions, which the music had awakened, were stifled in the heart of Mrs. Stanley, and she again took up the old complaining tune.

"Yes, there is Mrs. Alfred, with nothing to do but walk over the rich carpet, her foot half buried in its flowers; and her eyes feasted upon grand paintings, and rare flowers; and not a child to trouble her; a carriage at her service; and a husband who is so devoted—idolizes her, they say; and I must worry and toil all day; Harry and Katie are a constant care when out of school, and the babe is so fretful that I seldom find time to read."

"And yet, if the Reaper were to demand of you a sheaf for the Lord of Paradise, could you give them up?" There was just a shadow of reproach in Aunt Esther's voice.

"Oh, of course not; I could not part with my children; but—but—I mean that I am so weary of care; and it seems so unjust that one should tread a path of thorns, and another, of roses."

"Flora, is it more than just, that the traveler who has pursued his journey under heavy clouds and chilling storms in the morning, should at length be permitted to see them disperse, and to feel the warm sunlight; and, that when the sun is ushered through the gates of the west, that all those clouds should turn to rich fleets of crimson, brightly seamed with gold?"

"Of course not, Aunt Esther; but one should not be compelled to travel all day in the storm, while another is enjoying a pleasant journey."

"No, Flora; but was not the morning of your life as bright as devoted parents could render it? Was not your path along the flowery meadows of childhood, where only light shadows played, and never a storm descended?"

"Yes, aunt; but those were my only happy days."

"But those, you admit, were full of pleasure; and now Flora, to convince you that our Father bestows not all his blessings upon one, but often makes up at one period for what has been suffered at another, permit me to relate to you the history of the lady over the way."

"Why, Aunt Esther, are you acquainted with her early history?" womanly curiosity prevailing over every other feeling.

"Yes, I am very familiar with it. Mrs. Alfred was Stella May; her mother was one of my most esteemed acquaintances in a village of New Hampshire, where we both resided. But she was of a delicate organization, and after a winter of unusual severity, just as a green flush began to spread the forest canopy for the reception of the approaching summer queen, they cut through the anemones and violets, to lay beneath their broidery Stella's mother.

"Stella was then nine; a reserved, thoughtful looking child; not remarkably pretty, although her deep eyes were admired. A year after her mother's death, her father's grave was made by her mother's, and his affairs being much involved, Stella was left penniless, with no relatives who could receive her into their families. She was taken by a lady of the village as a nurse for her children, and for three years her life was devoted to them. Fortunately for Stella, this family moved to a distant part of the Union, and she was transferred to another home, where she was permitted to attend school. Her active mind soon placed her upon an equality with those of her age; and, although Stella was never supposed to be tired in the discharge of her duties, she was cheerful, and appeared contented.

"About this time she evinced so rare a talent for music, that a lady amateur offered to instruct her gratis, as long as she applied herself diligently; and when she was sixteen, she had not an equal, as a performer, in the village.

"She began to give lessons, and a wealthy merchant from N. York, who was spending a few days in her town, attracted by her brilliant performance, employed her as teacher and companion for his own daughter; who being an only child, complained of loneliness.

"As he was well known by Stella's guardian, she gladly embraced the opportunity of rendering herself independent, and accompanied Mr. Hale to New York.

"She did not find his daughter, Georgianna, the young lady whom her imagination had fondly pictured. She had fancied her conscious of her position and filling it with dignity, yet, at the same time, abounding with amiability; so natural it is for a pure mind to cast its reflection upon those with whom it is associated.



"Miss Hale had been pampered and flattered by her weak mother, and so often reminded of the high position which she occupied as the 'heiress,' that it had become to her a title of such importance, that she would have regarded anything less than an atmosphere of haughtiness towards those below her in position, a compromise of her dignity.

"She had not learned the axiom, that quality will convey an impression of itself, as truly as the sweet or unpleasing odors of plants impress themselves upon the senses; and that true superiority of heart, mind, or character, is, to our perceptions, what perfumes are to the olfactories.

"Mrs. Hale was pleased with Stella's patience with Georgin, for few teachers would submit to her irritability; and knowing that it would be much to her interest to retain her, procured her enough scholars to enable her to realize a snug little salary for her maintenance.

"She had remained in Mr. Hale's family three years, and was now nineteen. She had not bloomed into what society recognizes as a beauty, but her face was fair, and her countenance was high, as well as deep-toned. But her large eyes, in which the soft, clear flame of beautiful thoughts ever glowed, were the attraction of her face; and her voice, that echo from the soul, was so soft, low, and musical, that it seemed a bright rivulet, flowing smoothly over the thought-pearls, shining up so purely from the depths of her mind.

"Georgia enjoyed her society when alone, and as a private companion found her indispensable; but in company, she wished the fact kept constantly before the mind, that there was a great gulf between Miss Hale, the heiress, and Miss May, the music teacher. And, when at times, Stella came out from the fortress of her reserve, and allowed the flowers of her thoughts to exhale their fragrance in conversation, Georgia could but poorly conceal her uneasiness as to the result of those beautiful eyes, and that expressive face, when the moonlight of ideality was irradiating it by its enchantment.

"Georgia, like most young ladies of her age, was in love. Like 'David Copperfield,' she 'ate and drank Dora;' viz: Walter Alfred, a young man of high social position, and the possessor of that great elevator to feminine regard, wealth. Georgia had more than once pointed out to Stella Mr. Alfred's beautiful residence; 'and you, Stella, shall be my maid of honor,' she would patronizingly add, when

she had wrought herself up to her most amiable humor, by the delightful contemplation of becoming Mrs. Alfred.

"Stella often met Mr. Alfred in the parlor; and at first admired him; and, then she felt the fortifications of her heart giving away beneath the artillery of those clear, hazel eyes; for she thought she discerned a soul, from which their light was reflected, richly freighted with the noblest attributes of manhood. There was something in his full vibrative voice which troubled the fountains of affection, and threw them into wild commotion.

"At first, she would not acknowledge the guest who sat enthroned in, purple, in her heart's sanctuary; but one evening, she played at his request, one of his favorites; and, as one of the beautiful lines, like a chain of pearls, thrilled upon the echoes of her musical voice, their eyes met; and Stella knew that she was a captive, who had no longer control over her own happiness.

"A thrill of anguish made her heart almost cease its beating, as the planet of love rose, full orb'd, from the cloud, where it had been hidden. How mocking was its brilliance! like that of some rich gem, flashing and glittering in the eyes of a child of poverty; yet, defying all his attempts to grasp it.

"Loving, with the depth and intensity of her tropical nature, one who was affianced to another, whose position was so far above hers, it was hopeless—sinful; and she resolved to uproot this rare blossom which had suddenly made her heart fragrant by its purple bloom, although happiness should fall, crushed and bleeding, beneath the keen blade of duty, which should cleave it asunder. Her plans were speedily matured. She would return to the village from whence she came, and there await another opportunity of finding employment.

"Mr. and Mrs. Hale were surprised, and pained at her announcement, that she must leave the city; and made her a most generous offer, to induce her to remain; but Stella did not swerve from her purpose; and expressing her gratitude to her employers for their appreciation of her efforts, she left in the six o'clock train, the next morning, for Cumberland.

"'You must come, Stella,' whispered Georgia, at their parting, 'and play Walter's favorite at our wedding.'

"Had she been an acute observer of emotion, she would have read all in Stella's great, dark eyes, as she replied,

"'No, Georgia, you will not need me, then.'

"The huge iron horse sent out from his nostrils black volumes of smoke, and soon the tramp of his ponderous feet, bore on the cars with such speed, that hill, creek, and forest, seemed engaged in a fantastic dance.

"Stella sat alone in her gray travelling dress, looking musingly, and sadly, out upon nature, as it sped past upon flying feet. In three years, the artist Time had touched with many shades of grace, the picture of her life; and she was a refined, and in the higher sense of the word, a beautiful woman.

"She had been at Cumberland a month; what a long, weary month; and, although her face was paler, it was more spiritualized and sublimated in its expression. It was an August evening, and Stella was sitting upon the rose trellised porch, looking into the face of the east, which was brightening, as the expected evening queen drew near, and at length appeared at the eastern portal, where a train of stars received and ushered her proudly into the gay assemblage.

"In the hazy twilight, and the white moonlight, how narrow seems the space between us and the spirit land; as, if we drew so near, that faint echoes of their music trembled through our souls, begetting there, high and holy impulses; and when the magical moonlight lies with its enchantment upon the earth, we half believe the curtains looped aside from the windows of the heavenly temple, and the splendor of its celestial lamps shining down upon our planet.

"Stella was borrowing strength and inspiration from the hour. She was resolved to forget self, and labor for the benefit of others. To take the sickle in her hand, and go out into the harvest, that the world might be at least some better for her having lived in it.

"Her train of reflections were broken by her guardian's little daughter, who came bounding upon the porch.

"Stella, Stella! come into the parlor; there is a gentleman there, who wants to see you."

"Mr. Loyd, I suppose, Lillie; he was to bring me a new piece of music this evening," and Stella rose, and followed the little flitting figure into the parlor.

"He was sitting with his face averted, but turned, as the rustle of her dress, warned him of her presence.

"Mr. Alfred!" the words sprang to her lips, as did the color to her face. Her greeting was cold, while his was cordial, almost tender.

"A few commonplace remarks were passed, when Mr. Alfred said,

"Miss May, will you permit me to deliver the message, which brought me here this evening."

"She supposed he had come to invite her to be present at his and Georgin's wedding, and a sharp pang shot through her heart, as she replied,

"I shall be glad to hear it, Mr. Alfred."

"For a moment, the dark eyes rested full upon her face, then he replied in a modulated tone,

"I should be happy if I thought so, Miss May. I have in my heart a frame, wrought of the purest and best of my nature, but it is unfilled yet, and your image is the only one which I ever wished placed there. Shall I have the picture?"

"How the currents of her heart would have burst from their fetters of ice, and dimpled into music, had not the thought of what Georgina had told her, sat at the door, where happiness was pleading to enter. And he was trying, for his own amusement, his power upon her heart, was the thought that stung her proud nature, and aroused all the energies of her soul; as a quiet camp is in a moment aroused from its monotony, at the alarm of an enemy. Her eyes flashed with feeling, as she drew herself up before him.

"Mr. Alfred!" she exclaimed, 'while you have sought to trifle with me, you have also given me credit for so small an amount of penetration, as not to discern, that the affianced of Miss Hale would scarcely offer his hand to a fortuneless orphan, with any other motive than flattering her vanity, by the supposed eager acceptance of wealth and position, such as you could confer; and then crushing her by disappointment, as you are crushing that rose in your hand, Mr. Alfred, now that you no longer care to inhale its fragrance.'

"Sorrow was in Mr. Alfred's eyes at first, and then a flash of light swept over his face, as the sunlight over a dark landscape. A new thought had entered his mind.

"Miss May, may I inquire what evidence you have of my engagement to Miss Hale?"

"Her own words, sir; and your frequent calls at her house."

"Perhaps I can convince you, that you alone was the magnet which drew me there, when I inform you that I have not been there since you left; and if you wish farther proof than my word, that there is not, nor has ever been, an engagement existing between us, I

will tell Miss Hale in your presence, that I have offered you my hand!

"Stella, I love you; every tendril of my heart is clasping around you; but you are too noble, too true to yourself, and will be too just to me, to accept me, unless you can draw aside in the temple of your heart the veil of the Holy of Holies, and give me a throne there, which I would rather occupy than the proudest one, around which fell the royal purple of the Cæsars."

"He had arisen from his chair, and sented himself by her side. Respectfully he took her hand—

"Have I any hope of ever possessing this, Stella?"

"She raised her eyes timidly, to read the expression of his face. It was aglow with tenderness and sincerity, and the tears which fell upon his hand thrilled him with delicious ecstasy; for he knew they were overflowing drops from the fountains of affection; and he drew her to his heart, and pressed upon her rich lips the seal of their betrothal.

"I have in you a fortune, Stella," said Mr. Alfred, "far more valuable and difficult to obtain than gold—a mind perfumed by the richest gem woman possesses—a loving heart. Many young ladies would have married my position; but I knew that you would never compromise your womanhood by a marriage that was not sanctified by the baptism of love.

"Stella May, the orphan! How had the bleak winter morning of her life been transformed into the fragrant summer day; and over and around the mountains and valleys of existence, hung the mists of happiness in the approaching future, and loving cadences swept like the tones of a grand, majestic organ, through her heart.

"Georgia was too indignant to even respond to Stella's invitation to be present at her wedding. How Walter Alfred had ever been entrapped by that artful Stella, she could not comprehend; and, although many of his aristocratic friends were surprised at the choice of the young man, who might have selected a bride from the heiresses of his acquaintance, they could but admire Stella, who presided with as much ease and dignity in her splendid home, as though to the 'manor born.' And now she is gathering the flowers of ease and happiness which grew around your feet in the sunny May of your girlhood Flora, when her life was full of frost and darkness; and there is that in her face which tells me that she has exalted and

purified her nature by the trials through which she has passed.

"Believe me, my dear Flora, in meeting obstacles bravely, and overcoming them, resides the alchemy which ennobles and raises to higher planes; which imparts the power of irradiating all around us, as the moon, by her own brightness, illumines everything towards which her face is turned."

"And you think I have the power to make my home brighter, Aunt Esther?"

"You have, Flora. Pardon my plainness. Your happiness depends as much upon the light within, as that which surrounds you. The wife and mother is the central sun from which husband and children receive warmth and light; and if that sun is eclipsed by indifference and neglect, darkness and coldness will fall upon the hearthstone, and hang like grim spectres at the portal of your home."

Five years later, Aunt Esther is Mrs. Stanley's guest. The shadows which of yore marred the beauty of her face, have almost disappeared; and patience, and good resolves, have written their calm sentences of peace upon her brow.

"Your path is leading into a land of flowers and cool fountains, is it not, Flora?"

"Yes, aunt; and to you and Mrs. Alfred am I indebted for showing me the path which led to them. I used so bitterly to envy her; but, what she has told me of her childhood of sorrow and self-denial, taught me that those whom we envy, are perhaps only just presented the cup which we have long since drained. And, best of all, she has, by her example, illustrated to me, that if in the life-battle, the contest is hard, we are made stronger and better by fighting valiantly; that a high and earnest purpose in the heart can accomplish almost miracles, and bless its possessor with happiness; and, for the bright star of peace which now hangs over our home, I thank you, dear aunt, and the lady whom so much I envied, over the way."

## The Loyal Lover.

BY KATE SUTHERLAND.

"How shall I decide, Aunt Lucy? I cannot accept both?" The young lady, who was beautiful, affected a nonchalant air, and laughed a fleeting laugh. The smile did not dwell long around her lips, but faded away, leaving a sober expression on her countenance.

"It is not often, Ella, that a young lady has two offers of marriage at once, and from men with such equal claims to her regard," replied the aunt. "The choice, however, is alone with yourself."

"But, how shall I decide, Aunt Lucy? In the nature of things, one is more fitted for my husband than the other. How shall I determine on which side the fitness lies?"

"What says your heart?" The young lady did not answer immediately. She was looking down into her heart.

"That ought to decide," said Aunt Lucy.

"But it does not." Ella lifted her calm eyes from the floor, and looked steadily at her aunt.

"You do not show much excitement. Maidens, while deliberating on an offer of marriage, are not wont to be so cool and business like."

"If a maiden is ever cool and self-possessed in her life, it should be when so deliberating. For lack of being so, how many are led to commit the most fatal of errors."

"My inference is," said the aunt, "that your heart is not very deeply interested in either of the young men."

"I am not blindly in love; that is certain," was replied. "Both offers come unexpectedly."

"Scarcely so to me," remarked the aunt.

"I have seen, for some time, that Mr. Andrews was a lover; and you must have had less than

a maiden's usual penetration not to have perceived it likewise. I have also seen, that Mr. Floyd was doing all in his power to win your favor."

"They have certainly been most attentive. And I will own, that, of all my acquaintances, they stand highest in my regard. Still, my heart is yet in my own keeping; though one of them, I think, will be my choice."

"There should be no choice without love," said Aunt Lucy.

"And there will be none. First, however, I must decide between the two young men. One of them must be unconditionally rejected, and the other encouraged. I will act no double part."

"How will you decide?"

"My mind is not clear. I want your help."

"There must be a closer observation of the young men."

"Yes. I see that."

"What response did you make to Mr. Andrews?"

"I told him, with as much calmness as I could assume, that before answering in a matter involving so much, I must have time for deliberation."

"Did you say that his offer was wholly unexpected?"

"No."

"Did he seem disappointed at your failure to respond, at once, in the affirmative."

"Yes. That was plain. His face, which had flushed, paled. He seemed to be thrown back upon himself. I felt for his position; but could not give the hope he sought."

"You promised a reply?"

"No."

"How then did you part?"

"He said that he would call upon me again to-morrow evening; and I bowed my assent."

"And so you parted?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Floyd proposes by letter?"

"Yes. And says that he will call on the same evening."

"They will be here together?"

"Yes."

"And at this interview, you will, most probably, decide between them?"

"I think so."

"It will be well," said Aunt Lucy, "to weigh carefully, in the interim, all considerations of external position; as to family, social standing, property and the like; so that a final decision may be unembarrassed by anything beyond personal character."

"As to that," answered Ella, "we happen to know considerable about both of them. Mr. Floyd has some advantages. He belongs, on his mother's side, to one of our oldest and most distinguished families. His father is very wealthy. A marriage with him would certainly give me position. The father of Mr. Andrews is from the east. He came here twenty years ago, and is, as we know, a merchant of good standing. I have never heard a light word spoken of either him or his family. Have you?"

"No."

"The son is, I believe, in business with his father?"

"Yes; that is so."

"The external conditions," said Ella, "are, therefore, so nearly balanced, that we may set them aside as not having weight in the case. One or the other must be rejected on personal grounds alone. Do you know anything unfavorable in regard to either?"

"No. Both stand fair."

"Was maiden ever more perplexed?" said Ella, with forced levity. Then growing serious again, she added, "I shall trust my intuitions to-morrow night. Both being present, I can give neither the expected answer. But, I will read them with eyes quick to apprehend the meaning of every sentence they chance to utter; and, from what then appears, decide."

To this conclusion Ella remained firm. On the next evening, the two young men called within five minutes of each other, and met, in mutual embarrassment, before the young lady came down to the parlor. Her entire self-possession, when she did appear, had the effect to put them, measurably, at their ease. One topic of conversation after another had been started, and run quickly into the ground for lack of interest, when Ella said, coming to the theme which, in all companies, pressed nearly every other theme aside—

"The last news from abroad looks threatening."

She saw the eyes of Mr. Andrews flash, instantly. But, he asked, without apparent feeling—

"Do you think so?"

"If it means interference with us, in our present trouble, yes."

"It does not," was the young man's decided answer.

"I am not so sure," said Floyd. "England and France must have cotton; and for this year and next, no adequate supply is possible,

except from our country. They are strong enough to open the blockade; and it's my opinion that they will do it before Christmas."

"They are not strong enough to get the cotton," remarked Andrews, firmly.

"I think they are! The combined navies and armies of two of the most powerful nations in the world, can destroy all the blockading squadrons we can send along the southern coast, and take their cotton supply in spite of us."

There was more in the tone of this assertion than in the assertion itself, that disturbed the placid beat of Ella's heart. It struck her as veiling something like a covert pleasure in anticipation of the result predicted. She turned her gaze upon Mr. Andrews, and awaited his answer. His eyes were brighter and larger than a little while before; and there was a nervous motion of his lips, as if strong words were on them, only held back from utterance by an effort.

"There is one man who will not be a living witness of that national humiliation," he said, after a pause, and in the tone of a man who felt deeply, but strove to hide all feeling.

"Who is that?" asked Floyd.

"His name is John Andrews!" There was a thrill in his voice that awakened a chord in the heart of Ella.

"I don't know that I clearly understand you," said Floyd, coldly. Ella felt the coldness, and it chilled her.

"My meaning is simply this: I will be a resisting soldier, and of the number who do not mean to survive a last defeat."

"You are patriotic, Mr. Andrews. Low, and musical, and very tranquil, was the voice of Floyd. If he felt, he did not betray the existence of feeling.

"I am for my country," was the simple, manly answer.

"Right or wrong?"

Ella, who was sitting on the end of a sofa, drew herself down, in an easy attitude, and gave her whole mind to an observation of her two lovers. She felt, that, in this controversy, she would be furnished with ample means for a just decision.

"Right or wrong?" repeated Floyd, pressing the question home. There was the faintest possible shade of exultation in his voice.

"Yes; I am for my country, right or wrong," replied Andrews.

"More than I can say." Dropped in the quiet, silvery tones of Floyd.

"What!" The sudden heart-throb of Andrews was in his voice:

"I am for the right, first, and for my country, in the degree that she is right." Floyd threw a glance of self-satisfaction upon Ella. But he read no response in her face.

"Only in the degree that she is right?" queried Andrews.

"Only," was replied.

"Then, for an error, you would abandon her in the hour of danger?"

"I did not say so." The tones were not quite so soft and silvery.

"I failed to apprehend your meaning," returned Andrews. "Principles lie at the basis of actions. As a man thinks, so he acts. Always in his acts will be found, in some degree, the quality of his thoughts in regard to his acts. Eminently does this hold good at the present time. If a man is for his country, right or wrong, he stands up for her boldly, and neither in thought, word, nor deed, gives aid and comfort to her enemies. He is for his country without an 'if' or a 'but.'"

"No matter how wicked and vile she may be?" said Floyd.

"If a man loves his country," replied Andrews, "his first thought will be her defence when assailed, no matter who may be her enemies—false-hearted citizens or outside foes. When the bulwarks of safety are made sure within and without, then he will set himself to the establishment of justice and equal rights, if these have been set aside. If our country has been wrong in anything, let us save her first, and right her afterwards. This is true loyalty."

"Who brought on this war?" demanded Floyd, still holding his smooth and courteous exterior.

"Do you ask seriously?" Andrews did not conceal his surprise at the question.

"I do."

"The answer is before the world. Acts speak for themselves."

"True," said Floyd. "Acts do speak for themselves. One section of the country arrayed itself against another section, denying its constitutional rights, and plodging itself to destroy them. That is patent to the world."

"No, it is not patent to the world," was calmly replied. "And I regret to hear one whom I have always given credit for intelligence, repeat the transparent assertion made by traitors in high places, whose only hope of retaining power was in a refuge of lies."

"Will you state the case?" asked Floyd: still with exterior courtesy.

Ella's eyes were on him, reading his countenance with intense interest. She liked its expression less and less every moment.

"As it appears to me," said Andrews.

"Amid all the party strifes by which our country has been agitated for years—mere struggles for domination, and the rewards of office, I mean—two great elements have been at work; principles if you choose to call them so. One, that looked to the largest liberty of the people, consistent with political safety, and that affirmed the Declaration of Independence without limitations; the other, assuming the right of a class to rule; claiming that all men are not free and equal; and holding to the enjoyment, by a few, of special rights and privileges, not guaranteed to the many. Now, I need not say, that an element of this latter kind is in opposition to the spirit and letter of our constitution. What I affirm is this:—In the last great political struggle, which resulted in the triumph of a party, the real elements in antagonism were the two I have mentioned. The former triumphed; and true to its quality, the latter, when it could not rule sought to destroy. Not a constitutional right had been touched; not an aggressive act so much as initiated or threatened; even while guarantees were being offered, the mad rule or ruin party struck quickly and desperately, hoping to surprise and destroy us. That is the answer, sir, which is before the world; and in closer accordance will be the impartial record of history. All other assumptions are mere tricks of the enemy, Mr. Floyd!"

"Do you call me an enemy?" Fire flashed from the young man's eyes. The silvery smoothness left his tones.

"I hold, and have so held from the beginning," replied Andrews, with grave, deliberate speech, "that we have only two classes of men now in the country; friends or enemies. If you are not for us, then you must be against us."

Floyd started to his feet in angry agitation. Ella kept her eyes upon him, with keen penetration. He crossed the room, in an indeterminate way, and then returning, sat down again.

"This is all out of place," said Andrews, in a tone of apology, turning to Ella. "I was betrayed into saying much more than I intended, and I must beg your pardon. My only excuse, is the strength of my feelings on this subject, involving, as it does, such momentous things."

"No apology is required," answered Ella, smiling with a gracious look, and speaking in an almost tender voice. "I have listened with deep interest. Frankly, Mr. Andrews, I am on your side; for my country in its integrity; and against all who, either openly or secretly hinder the restoration of law and order. As I read facts and principles, Mr. Floyd, you are wrong; so wrong, that I do not see how your thoughts and mine could ever run smoothly in one direction."

It was so gently, yet so firmly said, that Mr. Floyd, while not perceiving anything approaching to unladylike rudeness, understood the last sentence as conveying the answer he had come to receive. For a moment he sat very still, as if stunned; then rising, with a pale, agitated face, he bowed and withdrew. As he left the room, shutting the door behind him, Ella turned to Andrews. Their eyes dwelt in each other's for some moments. Ella spoke first, trying, but without complete success to maintain a placid exterior.

"The loyal citizen can hardly fail in loyalty to his wife," she said, lifting her hand as if to extend it towards him. He did not wait for the act, if intended, but caught it quickly, and held it to his lips. Ella made no motion to remove her hand. As it lay tightly clasped in that of the young man, a flood of new emotions swept over her soul. If there had been maidenly coldness, and a full possession of herself, that time was past. The loyal lover had opened the door of her heart, and gone in to share the kingdom.

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# The Old Dress,

## AND WHAT CAME OF WEARING IT.

BY R. L. YOUNG.

"Oh, little Jamie!—how I wish you would go to sleep.

"Sister wants to finish her dress; sister wants to look pretty, and clean, and fresh in somebody's eyes at the party to-night; and how can she if you hinder her so, unkind baby?

"You don't care a snap of your little dimpled fingers, indifferent baby, if she does have to wear her old merino dress, which is dingy, and dim, and unsuitable for May, and which you know has a little patch on the front breadth, an inch from the bottom, where she burnt it waiting on you, unreciprocating baby.

"Don't you suppose somebody will compare your sister with the dainty city ladies that have been proud to dance with him? And how will she look among the village girls, in their fresh roses and airy dresses—your poor sister, all crushed with holding you, ponderous baby!—hoarse with lulling you, wide-awake baby!—jaded with serving you, imperial baby! that must needs be attended to, if all else goes to ruin.

"What will somebody's beautiful Boston cousin say about your sister? She wouldn't think of wearing such a dress anywhere, much less to Judge Thayerton's. She would prefer not to go out at all, unless she could appear in a dress more suitable to the occasion; and so would your sister Milly very much, persistently exigent baby, if she could have her own way, which, as a general thing, nobody can have in this world without hurting some one else somewhere—a truth which I advise you to make a note of, ignorant baby, and reduce to practice, and your sister will go, so as not to mortify her little escort, Charley Ford; he'll think she isn't proud of his company if she don't go; her mother will think she is disappointed not to finish her dress; and she is as anxious not to make her mother unhappy as you will be ten, or twenty, or thirty years hence, undeveloped protector!

"Oh, you little rogue! there isn't a wink of sleep in you!" And Milly, who, with a perfectly serious face had been murmuring this quaint soliloquy in place of the lullaby long since exhausted, suddenly changed her tone, and coaxed the restless child into a high carnival of fun and frolic. But he would not be put down from her arms. Any device which hinted at the possibility of his entertaining

himself, he steadily resisted as an encroachment on rights, that knowing he "dared maintain."

Milly glanced from the clock to the airy folds of unfinished muslin. "It is too late to finish it now, any way," she said with an effort of courage, and folding all the work together, she laid it away and brushed the shreds from the carpet, gathered a heterogeneous collection of playthings into their appropriate basket, and did these hundred and one little things which must be done ever so many times in a day, to keep a room pleasant and comfortable, all the while supporting Jamie, who was well content to be carried about on one arm. Then she threw a mantle over the baby's head, and went out among her flowers.

"Don't you think it's almost time for mother to be coming home, little Dixie?" The sewing circle must be over, for the Conways and the Hilliards drove by some time ago; and there comes Mrs. Ford and—oh, they have brought mother in their carriage. Well done, Charley Ford, to get down and hand her out like a gentleman, as you are. We'll run down to the gate and meet her; how nice and pleasant she looks!—she shall find no clouds here."

However, while Nelly brushed her glossy hair, her mother said—

"I have seen Laura Clemens's dress that she made on purpose for the party at Judge Thayerton's, and it is not near as pretty as yours."

"Then how fortunate for her that mine will not be there to put it out of countenance."

"Why?—aint you going, Milly?" cried her mother.

"Oh yes, I'm going; I don't intend to miss the party; but I didn't get my dress done. I shall have to wear the merino one; it has short sleeves, you know; it will not be too warm."

"But the other would be so much more becoming. Can't it be finished now? Why didn't you tell me sooner, that I might go about it?"

"Oh no, dear mother; there's full two hours' work to be done. Besides, you don't know how to set on the trimming. Never mind, it will be new for next time."

"But I thought you was sure of finishing it, or I would have staid home to help you."

"When you stay home, mother, that I may go out, I'll—well, 'there's no use talking,' as Mr. Holland's clerk says. I was sure, I thought; but I happened to be hindered one



way and another. Baby—I see you have charmed him to sleep—has required a great deal of entertaining. Freddy came home from school in tears and trouble. He had slipped into the brook. You should have seen him, all green with slime and weeds, from head to foot; and that malicious Kit Conway had told him that it never could wash off—that his clothes were ruined. The poor child thought it was a serious matter, till he saw me laugh. I haven't laughed so much in a week. Well, it took some time to get him clothed, and in his right mind."

"I should think it might," said her mother. You had to mend some pants for him. I know he hadn't a whole pair in the world, except them he had on. I've had his others cut out these three weeks, and ought to have staid at home and made 'em to-day. I don't mean to sew any more for the heathen; I always do find that I've neglected my duty to my own family."

"Then the family—my share in it—will begin to make a fuss about one of its duties to you, mother."

"What is that, pray?"

"To see that you don't drudge and slave for us every minute of your life; to give you a half-holiday once in a while, even if it's to work for somebody else. Then think how disappointed Mrs. Clemans would be, after all her trouble in getting up the society, if the members should stay away. And poor Mrs. Conway, who never goes anywhere else, could have no recreation at all. I guess you won't give it up yet."

"Well, Milly, I must say you have wonderful patience. Any other girl, disappointed as you have been, would make everything blue."

"I should think I had," she answered gayly. "Don't you see the ribbon in my hair? and these about my wrists are like my dress—all blue."

Nevertheless, poor Millicent shrank from entering the dressing-room at Judge Thayer-ton's, as she stood unseen outside the door, and thought she had never seen her young friends look so handsome or so elegantly dressed. In the middle of the room stood a fair stranger. Oh, how fair! That, she knew at once, must be Theodore Duquesne's cousin from Boston. Miss Thayer-ton was introducing the rest with some pride.

"She won't be proud of me," thought poor Milly. "How Miss Duquesne's eyes sparkle. She looks as if she could make all the fun in the world of a body. Oh, I don't want to go in: I wish I could run away home."

But just then Miss Clemans arriving, met her with a warm greeting, and putting one arm about her waist, drew her into the dreaded circle, where Milly, somewhat relieved to have been presented while partially concealed by her wrappings, and to find herself comparatively unnoticed in the general interest excited by the stranger, quietly prepared herself to go down, but noticed with a sinking heart that no one else wore a thick dress like hers, and thought how light it would be in the parlor, where Theodore and everybody could see her.

Farther up the room, and just behind the laughing and chatting girls in the centre, Kitty Conway—careless little butterfly as she was—had set a light upon the floor that she might see to unknot a tangled gaiter lace. Absorbed in this perplexing business, she never noticed that every movement of the unconscious group brought their light robes in dangerous proximity to the lamp, till a flash of flame, and a simultaneous cry of horror from every part of the room, aroused her. Miss Duquesne, turning quickly round, swept the rest of her dress past the lamp, and the snowy muslin lit in twenty places.

All was confusion and dismay; for the same terrible danger menaced every one whose inflammable drapery should receive a touch or even a spark from the cruel flame. One who was laving her hands at the moment of the catastrophe, immediately throw all the water towards the middle of the room, but with such haste and agitation that it availed nothing.

Such of the young men as had come in from seeing their horses secured, had been shown into a room at the opposite end of the long hall; among them was Theodore Duquesne. The instant he saw the awful peril of his cousin, he shouted to her to lie down. "Lie down instantly, Ada!" he cried, with thrilling earnestness, as he sprang towards her; but the frightened and agonized girl neither heeded nor heard. With some wild hope of finding water and throwing herself into it, she ran towards the stairs. They descended from that end of the hall nearest her, and he remembered—with an anguish that chilled his blood—her wonderful fleetness, that had distanced him in many a sportive race. What miracle could save her now! Once in the draught of the stairway, and how rapidly the flames would rise above her head, till she was beyond all human help, or dreadfully disfigured for life.

But there was one on whom his voice had more effect. Millicent—who had long uncon-

sciously, but with a woman's implicit faith, made him her oracle—sprang forward, and, with no other thought than that whatever he directed was for the best, and must be done, clasped the flying girl in her arms, and resolutely drew her to the floor.

She would have risen again immediately, but the important moment was gained, and at the same instant the carpet of the hall was torn from its fastening, turned over and closely wrapped about them by the strong and ready hands of young Duquesne.

"Both safe! Thank God! thank God!" he cried, fervently, as he lifted the struggling, half suffocated girls, and relieved them of the dusty covering, "and Milly, dear girl! brave, generous girl! what terrible sorrow you have saved us all! By this time, but for you—" his voice failed him, he grasped the balustrade for support, entirely overcome by the imminence of the danger just escaped.

It was soon ascertained that Ada was severely burned about the ankles, while Milly's arms and hands had suffered nearly as much. There were scarlet marks of flame across her face, and a startling blank where long meek lashes, and prettily arched eyebrows, had been; but no damage here, thank God! that time could not soon amend.

While some hurried about for dressings and bandages, and others satisfied the alarmed neighbors who came pouring in, Ada's mother, who had come with her from Boston, and was visiting at the Duquesnes, rushed in, with ashen face and eyes wild with a terrible anxiety, followed by her sister, scarcely less appalled. "Where?" she cried, breathlessly.

"Dear aunt! she is saved. The danger is over!" cried Theodore, embracing her and his mother with joy. "One of the girls was brave enough to clasp flame and all in her arms, and drew her down before the blaze could reach her face at all. She is not even disfigured. Oh! but for that, she would have outran me; she would have run till she was burned to death!"

"That they mostly do," said one of the neighbors. "It's natural, I suppose, when they get afire. How often we read of poor wretches that run blazing out into the streets, and before they can be reached, are burned past all hope."

"But I never should have expected," said another, "that shy and quiet little Milly Herriek would have had courage to do as she did. If it had been one of those high, strong Hilliards, or Victoria Conway now, 'twouldn't seem so

strange; but it seems they did nothing but scream, even after every spark was out."

"Quiet people are the ones to rely on," said Judge Thayerton. "Millicent has a great deal of character; she is a sweet girl, as well as a brave one. I wish my own little flyaway darling was more like her."

"And if Theodore Duquesne hadn't known exactly what to do, at the right minute, we should have a much sadder story to tell, I'm thinking. That's generally the trouble, nobody knows or thinks till it's too late, what ought to be done."

But the anxious mother had not waited all this time; she had hurried in to embrace her darling, who seemed like one restored from the grave—so terrible had been her dread, since a hasty and imperfect report of the accident had reached her—and to bless with thankful tears the dear girl, whose timely aid had saved her only child from a death so horrible.

The next morning—as Millicent sat on the floor amusing Jamie with one slipped foot, or by playing "bo-peep" through her diminished curls, while he evidently wondered at the unwonted abridgment of her resources—Theodore came with his mother and aunt to renew their thanks, and to express them to her parents, who were very proud of her, and not the less so that she had won the kindness of the Duquesnes, who were much looked up to in that little community.

"But," Milly said, "I do not deserve your praise at all. Ada owes her life entirely to Mr. Duquesne. If he had not been so quick, we should both have suffered dreadfully. As for the little I did, any of the other girls could have done it; only their dresses made it dangerous for them to go near her. I knew that my woollen dress would not blaze up 'round me; so you see I did not need any great courage."

"But what did you think could save your poor beautiful arms, when you thrust them into the flame, Milly?" said the young man.

"Oh, I didn't think of them at all," she confessed. "I only thought how the fire would scar her face if it got up to it."

"So you took the scars yourself, dear child!" said Ada's mother, tearfully, kissing her. "Ada said this morning, that she wished she could take your burns on herself, she feels so sorry that you should have the worst of it in saving her."

"Not the worst, I'm sure, madam."

"True, her injuries are deeper, but the marks will do little harm there, you know, while yours—"

"I can always wear long sleeves; and then, if I put on gloves I shall do very well. Oh, tell her I do not mind scars. I am so thankful that it is no worse, when I think what might have happened."

"And how did you happen to know, or to think, that a person should lie down? I can see now how much it would save them; but I never should have thought of it myself."

"There again," Milly said, glancing towards Theodore, "you give me credit that is due to another. I didn't know—I never thought anything about it. I heard Mr. Duquesne tell his cousin to lie down, and I saw that she did not notice. Poor young lady! how should she? so I drew her down, thinking that whatever he said must be right."

Theodore's mother looked quickly at him; but perceiving that he was as far from suspecting the whole meaning of this naive confession, as the artless girl who made it, she wisely kept her own counsel; only her eyes dwelt on the young girl with a new and tender interest, as on one who might become her daughter, and not an unwelcome one, either; for since her son's success in Boston, she had often been afraid he would marry a city wife, who would despise his country home and friends.

"Well," cried Miss Conway, to some of her mates, a few weeks after this, "if I'd only known, I would have been willing to get burnt a little at Judge Thayerton's. Just see what a heroine it has made of little Herrick! Alfred Duquesne has sent her an exquisite gold watch from Boston. They say he's ever so proud of his daughter's beauty; and there is Theo. going down almost every day to read to her; to take her riding; or to carry her mother something, (for nobody need court Milly that forgets her mother,) or to take out Ada, who cannot walk yet. Such attention is worth some risk. And to have secured the most elegant beau about, when we were all dying for a chance to fascinate him."

"Now Victoria Conway, there's no use in pretending that you want him," said Miss Clemans, good naturedly, "for to my certain knowledge you have refused as good men as he, and you might as well let him make love where it wont be wasted."

"Let him! Nobody can help it, and that's what I rave about," rejoined the lively girl. "If I didn't want him 'for keeps,' and don't you be too sure of that, either; wouldn't it have been delightful to have such a splendid fellow devoted to a body even for a little while, giving

one such bouquets as I saw on Milly's table yesterday, riding out with one, and all that? And you know some one of us might have enjoyed it, in the natural course of events; for Milly never would have put herself forward, and Duquesne is enough like the rest of mankind never to see her without; but it's spilt milk now. I resign myself. He'll marry her, and take her off to Boston, and 'dress her in silks and laces so fine,' as the old song says, and the Boston Duquesnes will make everything of her, and then Theodore will bring her down here to Thanksgivings and such, and we shall all be convened at the Duquesne mansion to do her honor, and shall say 'we're so glad to see her.'"

"And say it honestly, at least I know you will," replied Laura Clemans, "and so shall I, for I always knew she deserved as much, though I own I never expected she'd get it. Providence is so apt to use that sort of women for missionaries, and give them some heathen of a husband to exercise their gifts of grace and goodness on."

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## The Power of Hearty Laughter.

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The following incident, says the New Haven Palladium, comes to us thoroughly authenticated, although we are not at liberty to publish any names:—A short time since, two individuals in this city were lying in one room, very sick; one with brain fever, and the other with an aggravated case of mumps. They were so low, that watchers were needed every night, and it was thought doubtful if the one sick of fever would recover. A gentleman was engaged to watch one night, his duty being to wake the nurse whenever it became necessary to take the medicine. In the course of the night, both watcher and nurse fell asleep. The man with the mumps lay watching the clock, and saw that it was time to give the fever patient his potion. He was unable to speak aloud, or to move any portion of his body, except his arms; but, seizing a pillow, he managed to strike the watcher in the face with it. Thus suddenly awakened, the watcher sprang from his seat, falling to the floor, and awakening both the nurse and fever patient. The incident struck both the sick men as very ludicrous, and they laughed most heartily at it for fifteen or twenty minutes. When the doctor came in the morning, he found his patients vastly improved—said he had never known so sudden a turn for the better—and they are now both out and well. Who says laughter is not the best of medicines?

## The Store Girl.

A week at the sea-shore gives large opportunity for the study of human nature. Its phases, as there seen, are curious and instructive. What people really are, comes out on exhibition. Individuality is thrown, with great distinctness, on a common background, and each reads the other's character almost as plainly as if it were written in a book. Ask your friend what she thinks of Mrs. or Miss So-and-So. If she have met her at the sea-shore, she will answer without hesitation, and offer you a leading trait, favorable or unfavorable, but very near the exact truth. It is remarkable how entirely some people are off their guard at the sea-shore—how completely they act themselves out. You see the true lady and gentleman there—limited to no, class, grade, or set; the snobbish pretenders, whose every act gives the lie to their pretence; the jaunty vulgar, who obtrude their lack of culture and common-sense in the faces of all; and the consciously inferior, or over-modest, who move about straight-laced, weakly imagining that they are the observed of all observers.

Sitting on the piazza of the Surf House at Atlantic City, enjoying the cool sea breezes, this conversation reached me. I could not help hearing it, for the speakers were close by, and talked in loud tones.

"Who is that girl?" was asked in a curious voice, as if the person indicated had, from some cause, awakened an interest in the speaker's mind.

The individual referred to was a young lady of fair complexion, whom I had noticed several times. There was something about her that attracted all eyes; and yet she was neither richly nor gayly attired, and evidently shrunk from observation. The style of her face was a regular oval; complexion, as I have said, fair; eyes, a soft bluish gray, large and calm; height, medium; carriage, easy and unconscious; dress plain, and not costly, but of the finest quality, and in perfect taste. No wonder that in the flaunting, obtrusive, overdressed mass of her sex, she stood individualized, nor that the question which had just come to my ear was frequently asked. I listened for the answer.

"Don't you know her?" I noticed a tone of contempt in the voice.

"There's something familiar in the face, but for the life of me I can't make her out;" returned the first speaker.

"One of Levy's store girls."

"No!"

"Yes; I've bought many a dress from her."

"Now, you don't say so! Well, it does beat all! Oh, yes; now I recognize her. One of Levy's girls! Isn't it about time we were going home, Kate?"

"I rather think it is. When it comes to being mixed up with this sort of cattle, I'm for retiring. A store girl! Well, well!"

Naturally, after such a revelation of themselves, I observed more narrowly the speakers. How remarkably they contrasted with the young lady about whom they talked so depreciatingly. They were dressed in gay gauds, and exhibited a profusion of costly laces and jewelry. At first sight, their faces indicated gentle blood; a second and closer inspection, revealed the essential taint of commonality. I speak of blood in the truer sense, as representing mental and moral qualities. The refined and the vulgar are in all social grades. Blood flows not in obedience to conventionalities. It may be as pure in the veins of a peasant, as in those of a titled nobleman.

A tall lady passed, leaning on the arm of a short, stout gentleman. She was pale and thin, with a refined and gentle face—he bluff and hearty. The two girls looked at each other, drew down the corners of their mouths, snickered—I use the right word—and then stuffed their handkerchiefs in their mouths to keep from laughing outright.

"They'll kill me, Em, if they stay here much longer," said one of them, shaking with laughter as the couple disappeared in the house. "I never saw anything so funny."

"Hush, Kate," was rejoined, "here's Father Time."

I looked in the direction of their eyes, and observed a thin, white-haired man, with bent form and slow steps, coming along the piazza. His figure was striking, and gave the impression of a once strong man, who had yielded under protest, step by step, as age advanced, and now stooped, half sadly, in conscious weakness, under the weight of many years. I was touched by his aspect. Not so my young ladies. He was game for them. Already they had designated him as "Father Time;" and now, as he came towards us, they stared at him rudely, casting sly looks at, or nudging each other.

"A scythe and hour glass would make the figure complete."

He was close upon us. I felt shocked. Unless very dull of hearing, the rude sentence must

have reached him. There was a second crowding of handkerchiefs into the young ladies' mouths, to keep from laughing. The old man stood close to them for a little while, then remarked, in a pleasant, familiar way, so beautiful in aged persons who have grown old wisely and gracefully, and which all the truly refined accept as a compliment instead of an intrusion, though the person be a stranger—

"A charming day, young ladies."

But, instead of meeting this salutation with the instinct of gentle blood, these vulgar misses bridled and frowned, and tried to look haughty and dignified. The old man regarded them in momentary surprise, and then moved on again.

"What do you think of that?" asked one of the other.

"Did you ever hear of anything so rude!" was the almost angry response.

"Never in my life. The old brute!"

For a short time, they expatiated on the old man's brutality and want of breeding in mistaking them for ladies, and then resumed their amusement of remarking upon and caricaturing the various individuals who passed before them. Nothing escaped their searching eyes. Every peculiarity was magnified, and even beauties and virtues turned into deformities and vices. They were witty at times, and showed familiarity with Dickens, Thackeray, Bulwer, and the leading novelists, and applied with some skill the characters in books to the living personalities of the hour. But, in all this, they showed an ingrained coarseness, selfishness and vulgarity that was really shocking, taking into consideration the social place they assumed to fill.

It was my turn to make inquiry, and in due time I learned that my young ladies were daughters of two Philadelphia merchants, who had grown rich in trade, and now lived in splendid suburban residences. I further learned, that their fathers had once been poor clerks, and their mothers poor girls—one of the latter having actually been employed in a dry goods store at four dollars a week, occupying that position at the time of her marriage. Their fathers were known in the community as shrewd merchants and honorable men; not very refined nor well educated—early culture having been denied them; but sensible men in the main, and good citizens; men in no way ashamed of their humble origin; but, rather, proud of the fact that they were architects of their own fortunes, and thence inclined to an ostentatious display of wealth. The weaker

vessels were the mothers, whose heads turned a little with the elevation to which they had risen through no strength of their own, and who, looking down from that elevation, were disposed to think meanly of everything below. False pride, and false estimates of things, were naturally imbibed by the daughters, and mingled with every thread, as the shuttle flew backwards and forwards, weaving the fabric of character. And so, they were less than their mothers to blame for what they were: though, taking the natural stock, it would have required much budding and grafting to get pleasant fruit.

In the evening, there was music and dancing in one of the parlors. Em and Kate, whom I noticed as almost inseparable, were there. They had taken a sofa to themselves, spreading out their wide skirts, so as to fill the space which four persons might have conveniently occupied. The tall, pale lady, evidently an invalid, came in, leaning on the arm of her stout, hearty-looking companion. Nearly every seat in the room was occupied. They came and stood near the sofa filled by my fine young ladies, Em and Kate. I saw the tall lady shrink a little in stature, and lean hard upon the stout gentleman's arm, evidently from weakness. He looked concerned, and glanced around, to find a seat. Observing that only these two girls occupied the large sofa, he said to one of them, in a polite way—

"Will you be kind enough to let this lady have a seat with you on the sofa?"

But neither of them moved an inch.

"Take my seat," I heard a low, gentle voice say, and turning my eyes from the two misses, I saw the "store girl's" hand on the invalid's arm, to whom she was offering her chair in that kind, persuasive way, that takes no denial.

"Thank you!—thank you!" answered the tall lady, in one of the sweetest of voices; "but I cannot deprive you of a seat."

"No deprivation at all. I can stand for hours without being weary. So, don't hesitate; your acceptance will give me pleasure." And she gently drew the invalid to her chair.

Now, there was nothing intrusive—nothing for effect, in the girl's manner; but a spontaneous acting out of the true lady, that was really beautiful. A native refinement gave grace to every movement. Several of those standing near observed the little scene, and I saw by their faces a common sentiment of admiration. The stout gentleman added his

thanks to those of the lady, and the girl drew back from observation.

The music and the dancing went on. My two refined young ladies held their places on the sofa, their heavily flounced, gay silk dresses covering the entire surface, from end to end. Presently, one of them received an invitation to dance, and was led to the floor. Instantly, I saw the stout gentleman look round from where he stood by his invalid companion, and seeing the girl who had given up her seat, took her half resisting hand, and led her to the vacant place on the sofa. She did not resist, although I saw by her countenance that she would have preferred standing unobtrusively where she was; but, the instinct of good breeding kept her from objecting to an act so kindly meant. Silk and jewelry was shocked by this sudden propinquity of the store girl. I saw her shrink, frown, and sweep the ample range of her dress closer to her person. Then she looked about uneasily; and then, unable to endure so close a contact with vulgarity, left her seat, and crossed the parlor with an air of affected dignity, that caused many lips near me to curve in amusement or contempt.

Three ladies now found room on the sofa, in the space just occupied by one. Among these, I recognized Mrs. H—, wife of an eminent lawyer, and known as one of the most cultivated, refined and excellent women in the city. She had been standing for ten or fifteen minutes, while my pinks of gentility, who could hardly endure to breathe the air in which one of "Levy's store girls" respired, sat in forced occupation of twice the room to which they were entitled. It so happened, that Mrs. H— came next on the sofa to the interesting young lady, whose humble position was held by Misses Pride and Pretension as a sign of inferiority. I noticed her turn and recognize her with a brightening face, at the same time offering her hand in a cordial manner, and saying—

"Why Gertrude! Is this you?"

She smiled in an easy, quiet way, answering—

"Yes, ma'am; I'm here for a few days."

"I'm right glad of it," returned Mrs. H—.

"If any one needs sea air, change, and recreation, it is you. When did you come down?"

"Day before yesterday."

"You must remain as long as possible."

"I shall have to return day after to-morrow."

"No, no, Gertrude; you must stay the week

out, at least. I shall be here until Saturday—"

She did not finish the sentence, for at that moment, the stout, bluff gentleman came up to the sofa, and said, in a hearty, familiar way—  
"Why bless me, Mrs. H—! How glad I am to meet you!"

"Captain G—!" Surprise was in the voice of Mrs. H—, as she stood up and warmly pressed the hand that was grasping her own. "This is indeed a pleasure! Where is Mrs. G—?"

The stout gentleman turned quickly to where the tall, pale lady was sitting, and leading her forward, said—

"Here is Alice."

The greeting between the two ladies was of the most cordial nature, for they were old friends, warmly attached to each other from their earliest years, as I learned from what passed between them.

Already, the girl who had been talking, a moment before, with Mrs. H—, was on her feet, and moving away, so that her place might be taken by the invalid; thus giving the two friends an opportunity to sit side by side. Observing that she was about to withdraw, Mrs. H— called to her, saying—

"Don't leave us, Gertrude."

"No—no—keep your seat. I will not disturb you a second time," said the pale lady, in remonstrance.

The stout gentleman bustled past the trio, and bringing the chair just vacated by his wife, arranged the three ladies to suit himself; Mrs. H— and Gertrude on the sofa, and his wife in the comfortable chair she had been occupying, right in front of them.

"That's Captain G—, of the Navy," I heard a gentleman near me remark.

"And who is his wife?"

"The daughter of Senator —," was replied.

The country knew them well, the Captain and the Senator, and held them both in honorable regard. I advanced a few steps nearer, for my interest was increasing.

"Let me introduce Miss Gertrude T—," said Mrs. H—, presenting the young lady to both Captain G— and his wife. Gertrude met this introduction with a modest, retiring manner, yet with no appearance of conscious inferiority.

"Miss T—?" The Captain looked at her curiously. "Not the daughter of our old friend Hermann T—?"

"The same," replied Mrs. H—.

"Born a lady, as he was a gentleman, every inch, from head to foot." And the bluff, warm-hearted Captain, looked at her with a brightening face. "The daughter of my old friend Hermann! I'm right glad to meet you, for your father's sake. Does she belong to your family?" He turned to Mrs. H——.

"No; Gertrude stands alone in the world."

"Alone?" The Captain did not comprehend this remark. He seemed perplexed.

"She is a believer, Captain, in the nobility of self-dependence. Like you, and my husband, she serves society to the best of her ability; taking what she earns as her own, and asking favor of no one."

I heard nothing further. Loud voices in another group drowned, for my ears, what passed among these old friends. Looking up, I saw among the listeners who had been attracted by the little stir of recognitions and introduction, a face rather blank with surprise; it was the face of one of my young ladies of such immaculate quality, that plebeian usefulness could not touch it without leaving a soil.

Every day after that, until the week closed, I saw Gertrude T—— in the company of Mrs. H—— and Mrs. Captain G——, and their deportment towards her was always that of friends and equals.

Since then, I have looked in at Levy's a few times, and noticed this young lady at her place behind one of the counters, and the sight awakened sentiments of respect; and since then, I have seen the two immaculates on the street, and at public places, dressed in "rich attire," bold, pretentious, flaunting, and my soul despised them.

So you have the contrast—the sensible, refined, independent "store girl," as the elegant Misses Em and Kate called her; and the proud, vain, coarse-minded parvenus, who mistake money for merit, and obtrude their want of good breeding in the faces of all, and to the astonishment and disgust of all. Is it too sharply drawn, observant reader? We leave it with you to decide.

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Aug 1, 1822;

FROM THE LONDON MAGAZINE.

### DETACHED THOUGHTS ON BOOKS AND READING.

To mind the inside of a book is to entertain one's self with the forced product of another man's brain. Now I think a man of quality and breeding may be much amused with the natural sprouts of his own.—*Lord Poppington in the Relapse.*

AN ingenious acquaintance of my own was so much struck with this bright sally of his Lordship, that he has left off reading altogether, to the great improvement of his originality. At the hazard of losing some credit on this head, I must confess that I dedicate no inconsiderable portion of my time to other people's thoughts. I dream away my life in others' speculations. I love to lose myself in other men's minds. When I am not walking, I am reading; I cannot sit and think. Books think for me.

I have no repugnances. Shaftsbury is not too genteel for me, nor Jonathan Wild too low. I can read any thing which I call a *book*. There are things in that shape which I cannot allow for such.

In this catalogue of *books which are no books—biblia a-biblia*—I reckon Court Calendars, Directories, Pocket Books (the Literary excepted), Draught Boards bound and lettered at the back, Scientific Treatises, Almanacks, Statutes at Large; the works of Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, Beattie, Soame Jenyns, and, generally, all those volumes which “no gentleman's library should be without;” the Histories of Flavius Josephus (that learned Jew), and Paley's Moral Philosophy. With these exceptions, I can read almost any thing. I bless my stars for a taste so catholic, so unexcluding.

I confess that it moves my spleen to see these *things in books' clothing* perched upon shelves, like false saints, usurpers of true shrines, intruders into the sanctuary, thrusting out the legitimate occupants. To reach down a well-bound semblance of a volume, and hope it some kind-hearted play-book, then, opening what “seem its leaves,” to come bolt upon a withering Population Essay. To expect a Steele, or a Farquhar, and find—Adam Smith. To view a well arranged assortment of blockheaded Encyclopædias (Anglicanas or Metropolitanas) set out in an array of Russia, or Morocco, when a tythe of that good leather would comfortably re-clothe my shivering folios; would renovate Paracelsus himself, and enable old Raymund Lully—I have them both, reader—to look like himself again in the world. I never see these impostors, but I long to strip them, to warm my ragged veterans in their spoils.

To be strong-backed and neat-bound is the desideratum of a volume. Magnificence comes after. This, when it can be afforded, is not to be lavished upon all kinds of books indiscriminately. I would not dress a set of Magazines, for instance, in full suit. The dishabille, or half-binding (with Russia backs ever), is *our* costume. A Shakspeare, or a Milton (unless the first editions), it were mere foppery to trick out in gay apparel. The possession of them confers no distinction. The

exterior of them (the things themselves being so common), strange to say, raises no sweet emotions, no tickling sense of property in the owner. Thomson's Seasons, again, looks best (I maintain it) a little torn, and dog's-eared. How beautiful to a genuine lover of reading are the sullied leaves, and worn out appearance, nay, the very odour (beyond Russia), if we would not forget kind feelings in fastidiousness, of an old "Circulating Library" Tom Jones, or Vicar of Wakefield! How they speak of the thousand thumbs, which have turned over their pages with delight!—of the lone sempstress, whom they may have cheered (milliner, or harder-working mantua-maker) after her long days-needle toil, running far into midnight, when she has snatched an hour, ill spared from sleep, to steep her cares, as in some Lethean cup, in spelling out their enchanting contents! Who would have them a whit less soiled? What better condition could we desire to see them in?

In some respects the better a book is, the less it demands from binding. Fielding, Smollet, Sterne, and all that class of perpetually self-reproductive volumes—Great Nature's Stereotypes—we see them individually perish with less regret, because we know the copies of them to be "eternæ." But where a book is at once both good and rare—where the individual is almost the species, and when *that* perishes,

*We know not where is that Promethean torch  
That can its light relumine—*

such a book, for instance, as the Life of the Duke of Newcastle, by his Duchess—no casket is rich enough, no casing sufficiently durable, to honour and keep safe such a jewel.

Not only rare volumes of this description, which seem hopeless ever to be reprinted; but old editions of writers, such as Sir Philip Sidney, Bishop Taylor, Milton in his prose works, Fuller—of whom we have reprints; yet the books themselves, though they go about, and are talked of here and there, we know, have not endenized themselves (nor possibly ever will) in the national heart, so as to become stock books—it is good to possess these in durable and costly covers.—I do not care for a First Folio of Shakspeare. You cannot make a *pet* book of an author whom every body reads. I rather prefer the common editions of Rowe and Tonson, without notes, and with *plates*, which, being so execrably bad, serve as maps, or modest remembrancers, to the text; and without pretending to any supposeable emulation with it, are so much better than the Shakspeare gallery *engravings*, which *did*. I have a community of feeling with my countrymen about his Plays; and I like those editions of him best, which have been oftenest tumbled about and handled.—On the contrary, I cannot read Beaumont and Fletcher but in Folio. The Octavo editions are painful to look at. I have no sympathy with them, nor with Mr. Gifford's Ben Jonson. If they were as much read as the current editions of the other poet, I should prefer them in that shape to the older one.—I do not know a more heartless sight than the reprint of the Anatomy of Melancholy. What need was there of unearthing the bones of that fantastic old great man, to expose them in a winding-sheet of the latest edition to modern censure? what hapless stationer could dream of Burton ever becoming popular?—The wretched Malone could not do worse, when he bribed the sexton of Stratford

church to let him whitewash the painted effigy of old Shakspeare, which stood there, in rude but lively fashion depicted, to the very colour of the cheek, the eye, the eye-brow, hair, the very dress he used to wear—the only authentic testimony we had, however imperfect, of these curious parts and parcels of him. They covered him over with a coat of white paint. By —, if I had been a justice of peace for Warwickshire, I would have clapt both commentator and sexton fast in the stocks for a pair of meddling sacrilegious varlets.

I think I see them at their work—these sapient trouble-tombs.

Shall I be thought fantastical, if I confess, that the names of some of our poets sound sweeter, and have a finer relish to the ear—to mine, at least—than that of Milton or of Shakspeare? It may be, that the latter are more staled and rung upon in common discourse. The sweetest names, and which carry a perfume in the mention, are, Kit Marlowe, Drayton, Drummond of Hawthornden, and Cowley.

Much depends upon *when* and *where* you read a book. In the five or six impatient minutes, before the dinner is quite ready, who would think of taking up the Fairy Queen for a stop-gap, or a volume of Bishop Andrewes' sermons?

Milton almost requires a solemn service of music to be played, before you enter upon him. But he brings his music—to which, who listens, had need bring docile thoughts and purged ears.

Winter evenings—the world shut out—with less of ceremony the gentle Shakspeare enters. At such a season, the Tempest—or his own Winter's Tale—

These two poets you cannot avoid reading aloud—to yourself, or (as it chances) to some single person listening. More than one—and it degenerates into an audience.

Books of quick interest, that hurry on for incidents, are for the eye to glide over solely. It will not do to read them out. I could never listen to even the better kind of modern novels without extreme irksomeness.

A newspaper, read out, is intolerable. In some of the Bank offices it is the custom (to save so much individual time) for one of the clerks—who is the best scholar—to commence upon the Times, or the Chronicle, and recite its entire contents aloud *pro bono publico*. With every advantage of lungs and elocution—the effect is singularly vapid.—In barbers' shops, and public-houses, a fellow will get up, and spell out a paragraph, which he communicates as some discovery. Another follows with *his* selection. So the entire journal transpires at length by piece-meal. Seldom-readers are slow readers, and, without this expedient no one in the company would probably ever travel through the contents of a whole paper.

Newspapers always excite curiosity. No one ever lays one down without a feeling of disappointment.

What an eternal time that gentleman in black, at Nando's, keeps the paper! I am sick of hearing the waiter bawling out incessantly, "the Chronicle is in hand, Sir."

As in these little Diurnals I generally skip the Foreign News—the Debates—and the Politics—I find the Morning Herald by far the most entertaining of them. It is an agreeable miscellany, rather than a newspaper.

Coming in to an inn at night—having ordered your supper—what



can be more delightful than to find lying in the window-seat, left there time out of mind by the carelessness of some former guest—two or three numbers of the old Town and Country Magazine, with its amusing *tete-à-tete* pictures.—“The Royal Lover and Lady G——;” “the Melting Platonic and the old Beau,”—and such like antiquated scandal? Would you exchange it—at that time, and in that place—for a better book?

Poor Tobin, who latterly fell blind, did not regret it so much for the weightier kinds of reading—the *Paradise Lost*, or *Comus*, he could have read to him—but he missed the pleasure of skimming over with his own eye—a magazine, or a light pamphlet.

I should not care to be caught in the serious avenues of some cathedral alone, and reading—*Candide*!

I do not remember a more whimsical surprise than having been once detected—by a familiar damsel—reclined at my ease upon the grass, on Primrose Hill (her *Cythera*), reading—*Pamela*. There was nothing in the book to make a man seriously ashamed at the exposure; but, as she seated herself down by me, and seemed determined to read in company, I could have wished it had been—any other book.—We read on very sociably for a few pages; and, not finding the author much to her taste, she got up, and—went away. Gentle casuist, I leave it to thee to conjecture, whether the blush (for there was one between us) was the property of the nymph, or the swain, in this dilemma. From me you shall never get the secret.

I am not much a friend to out-of-doors reading. I cannot settle my spirits to it. I knew a Unitarian minister, who was generally to be seen upon Snow-hill (as yet Skinner’s-street *was not*), between the hours of ten and eleven in the morning, studying a volume of Lardner. I own this to have been a strain of abstraction beyond my reach. I used to admire how he sidled along, keeping clear of secular contacts. An illiterate encounter with a porter’s knot, or a bread-basket, would have quickly put to flight all the theology I am master of, and have left me worse than indifferent to the five points.

I was once amused—there is a pleasure in *affecting* affectation—at the indignation of a crowd that was justling in with me at the pit door of Covent Garden theatre, to have a sight of Master Betty—then at once in his dawn and his meridian—in Hamlet. I had been invited quite unexpectedly to join a party, whom I met near the door of the play-house, and I happened to have in my hand a large octavo of Johnson and Steevens’s Shakspeare, which, the time not admitting of my carrying it home, of course went with me to the theatre. Just in the very heat and pressure of the doors opening—the *rush*, as they term it—I deliberately held the volume over my head, open at the scene in which the young Roscius had been most cried up, and quietly read by the lamp-light. The clamour became universal. “The affectation of the fellow,” cried one. “Look at that gentleman *reading*, papa,” squeaked a young lady, who in her admiration of the novelty almost forgot her fears. I read on. “He ought to have his book knocked out of his hand,” exclaimed a pursy cit, whose arms were too fast pinned to his side to suffer him to execute his kind intention. Still I read on—and, till the time came to pay my money, kept as unmoved, as Saint Antony at his Holy Offices, with the satyrs, apes, and hobgoblins, mopping, and making mouths at him, in the picture, while

the good man sits as undisturbed at the sight, as if he were sole tenant of the desert.—The individual rabble (I recognised more than one of their ugly faces) had damned a slight piece of mine but a few nights before, and I was determined the culprits should not a second time put me out of countenance.

There is a class of street-readers, whom I can never contemplate without affliction—the poor gentry, who, not having wherewithal to buy, or hire, a book, filch a little learning at the open stalls—the owner, with his hard eye, casting envious looks at them all the while, and thinking when they will have done. Venturing tenderly, page after page, expecting every moment when he shall interpose his interdict, and yet unable to deny themselves the gratification, they “snatch a fearful joy.” Martin B——, in this way, by daily fragments, got through two volumes of *Clarissa*, when the stall keeper damped his laudable ambition, by asking him (it was in his younger days) whether he meant to purchase the work. M. declares, that under no circumstances of his life did he ever peruse a book with half the satisfaction which he took in those uneasy snatches.